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REVIEWED!
STUNTMAN
Car chase chaos comes a cropper

REVIEWED!
FINALS FEVER
**Is it high marks or a drop punt
for AFL Live 2003?**

OCTOBER 2002 ISSUE 04
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next



FERRARI CHALLENGE



MICRO MACHINES

**TENCHU 3 / HITMAN 2/ MICRO MACHINES RIDE AGAIN
ON PS2 / CROUCHING TIGER / TUROK / F355 CHALLENGE
MINORITY REPORT / RAYMAN 3 / MAT HOFFMAN 2
JOHN CARPENTER'S THE THING / RALLY FUSION / WAY
OF THE SAMURAI / CONFLICT DESERT STORM / ROCKY
WRECKLESS / WHERE DO GAME NAMES COME FROM?
TY THE TASMANIAN TIGER / AND MORE, NATCH!**

THE LIST

We've crushed the price...

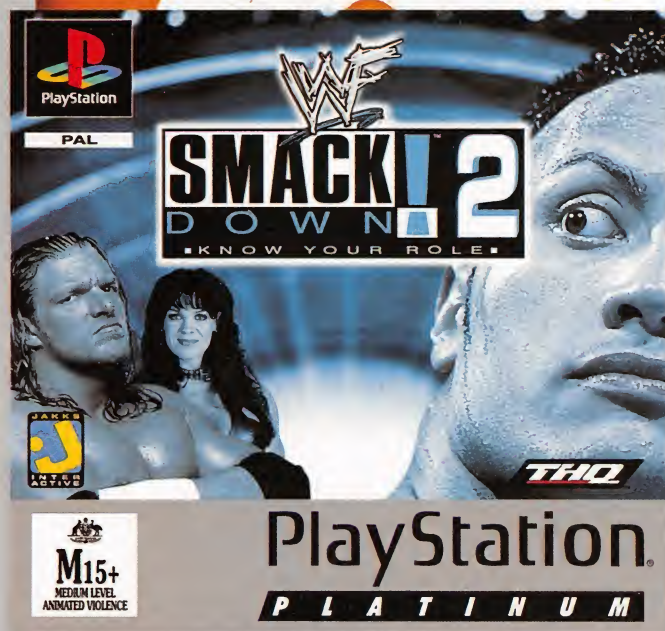
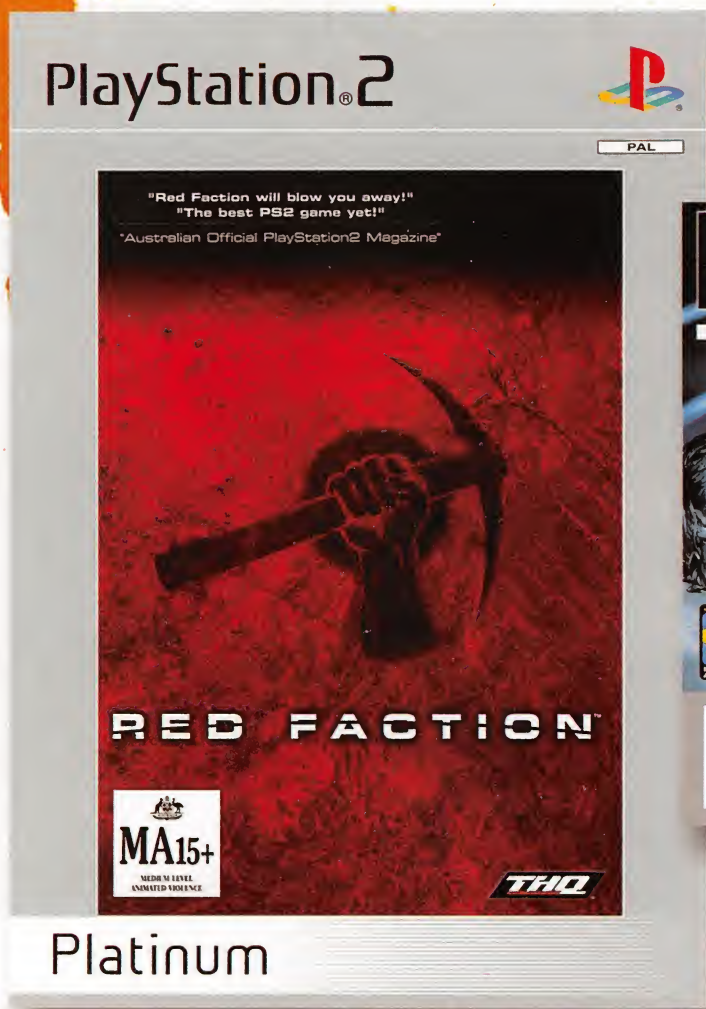


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TIMESPLITTERS 2
Crazed monster looming
behind cute young girl – it's
a PSW team night out.



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not afraid to use pink.



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THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE TWO TOWERS
"Hello, it's me, Aragorn. You may remember me from such covers as PSW#4."



94. STUFF Hello. This is your discman speaking. I need charging.



88 DVD REVIEWS It's Lord of the Rings. Again.



97 WIN! A steering wheel that works on all your driving games.



78 FREEKSTYLE See how we jump through hoops for you lot?

PSW WELCOME



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EDITORIAL

It's all gone a bit Tolkien-esque this month. First there was EA's *Two Towers* game dropping by the office in a half-finished state so we could slay some orcs and fall through missing bits of the scenery. Then the *Fellowship of the Ring* turned up on DVD, bringing all work in the office to a lurching halt as we donned our pointy wizard hats to watch the preview of the *Two Towers* film. Another three hours of special features on top of the already bladder-bursting movie proved a mountain too high for our reviewer, so the repetitive nature of the disc's extras provided some welcome relief. As much as we look forward to the even longer special edition release later this year, we're, erm... not really looking forward to it at all. Time to invest in a television for the bathroom, methinks. And, believe me, we'd quit taking the piss of the film's exorbitant length if it gave us enough time to take a leak in the first place.

So, Timesplitters 2, then. Golly it's good. Nothing would have given us greater pain than hyping this game every issue of our (admittedly short) existence only for it to arrive in a less than astounding condition. Fortunately, Free Radical Design has not merely delivered an immaculate first-person shooter but provided the opportunity for the most frenetically entertaining multiplayer hijinks since, well... since forever. Or maybe since Micro Machines V3 on PSone, we're still undecided on that count. What's your favourite multiplayer game? Write to davidw@next.com.au and tell me. I'd be interested to know if anyone owns a PS2 multi-tap, and if you don't then what will it take to convince you to buy one?

Oh, and I nearly forgot, welcome to the fourth issue of PlayStation World...

/DAVID WILDGOOSE EDITOR

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HOLLYWOOD UNDER YOUR THUMBS

CRUISE IS COMING TO YOUR CONSOLE WITH HIS LATEST BLOCKBUSTER, MINORITY REPORT.

■ YOU CAN'T HIDE

ACTIVISION IS SET TO UNLEASH A SILICON VERSION OF *Minority Report*, this year's futuristic Spielberg blockbuster starring Tom 'million-dollars-an-inch' Cruise. The third-person action adventure casts you in Tom's tiny high-lift shoes as a 'precrime' officer, a sort of armed psychic running around the near-future US with big exciting guns. Just as in the film, *Minority Report* the game is set in a somewhat corporate and dystopian Washington DC, 2045, where the Precrime Division use supposedly infallible equipment to spot future murders and get to the culprit before it happens. Of course, your character is wrongly accused and goes on the run to clear his name — the story's based on one by Phillip K Dick, best known for inspiring the

films *Blade Runner* and *Total Recall*. The terms of the license mean that many of the actual movie locations are replicated, along with key weaponry, guns and gadgets, so film fans will be able to play through some pivotal scenes. The storyline may well branch off, however, especially considering that Activision's license runs for five years and there may be multiple titles in a series.

Activision is simply publishing it, of course: the game itself is being created by Treyarch, the people that recently brought you *Spider-Man*. That game may have been slightly off target dynamics-wise, but it certainly showed it knows how to do some impressive architecture. If it can combine the look of the film with some entertaining action and gadgetry, they could well be onto a winner. *Minority Report* is due on PS2 in November.



THAT REALLY HURTS This man is bad. He deserves this. Probably.



IT'S ALL GONE WRONG The future looks as bad as the past. Heavy sigh.



STOP, CITIZEN! The pigs employ their fists of fury. Like a futuristic LAPD.



BREAKDANCE ON THE STREETS Sometimes you've just got to party down.



FLY, MY PRETTY The Spider-Man developer brings plenty of combo attacks to the game.





THE WAR IS OVER

PS2 MAINTAINS UNPRECEDENTED CONSOLE MARKET DOMINANCE

■ ONE SIXTIETH OF THE GLOBAL MARKET

AT E3 IN MAY THIS YEAR, SONY AMERICA'S KAZ HIRAI

declared the console war to be over. Unsurprisingly, he claimed Sony and the PlayStation2 had already emerged victorious. Recent sales figures for the Australian videogame market would seem to confirm Hirai's confident assertion.

Since Sony reduced the price of the PS2 to \$399 until the end of July, over 58,000 units have been sold across the country. In the same time period, the combined sales of the PS2's main rivals struggled to reach half that total with just slightly over 23,000 units between them. Indeed, the PSone almost matched one (particularly small and square) next generation console, falling just a few hundred sales behind. Pretty good for a format now seven years old.

"The PlayStation2 continues to outsell competitor products based on the quality of game play, huge catalogue of titles, entertainment options and future expansion capabilities," says Steve Wherrett, Director of PR and Promotions for SCE Australia, with understandable hubris.

Commenting on the release of sales data, Michael Ephraim, Managing Director SCE Australia says; "We have now sold approx. 440,000 PlayStation2 consoles in Australia and over 30 million worldwide. We are extremely pleased with the sales in Australia, which continues to be one of the lead countries for PlayStation2 sales. There are some truly amazing software titles set for release between now and the end of the year with many of those exclusive to the PlayStation2 format."

But then they would say that. We say it's good news, too. Because it means there are more people to buy PSW. Cheers for that.



MURDER ON THE DANCEFLOOR "Damn you, Bextor!"



WETWARE Tom demonstrates the PS3 controller.

INSPECT A GADGET

WE'RE PROMISED ALL THE TOYS. BUT WHAT ARE THEY?

FUTURISTIC SPIDER ROBOTS

These creepy crawlies can give you a quick retinal scan to figure out exactly who you are. Presumably the hideous spider shape causes arachnophobes to open their eyes really wide. Hot tip, criminals: in the future, don't be arachnophobic.

FUTURISTIC SHOCKWAVE GUNS

Perfect for simulating on PS2. Not only do they knock their targets flying, but they leave a beautiful swirling trail. "Like a pond. In the air!" enthused Chris, staring into the distance.

FUTURISTIC JET PACKS

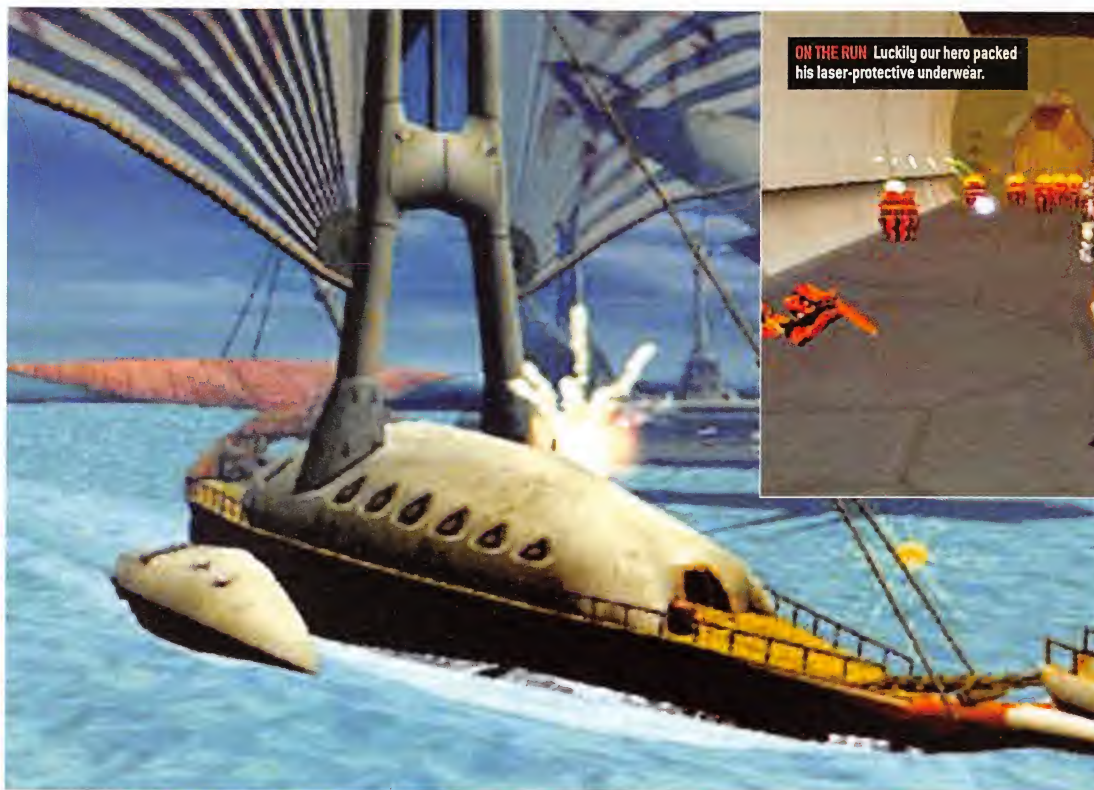
Look, it's the future, everybody knows trains have no place there. Amazingly, jetpacks already exist, but – incredibly – they're even more dangerous than the trains they've replaced.

FUTURISTIC PSYCHIC MACHINES

A machine to visualise the thoughts of psychics... imagine seeing inside Nicole Kidman's head! Imagine finding a vision of her exacting revenge on little Tom in a fit of murderous rage! Not a crime you'd want to stop. That's prime time TV, my friends, that's prime time TV.



PERSONALISED MARKETING "If you don't see my movie, I'll shoot!"



HAVEN'S ABOVE

PROMISES OF A SEAMLESS UNIVERSE TO EXPLORE IN **HAVEN: CALL OF THE KING**

■ SIZE ISN'T EVERYTHING

DO YOU PREFER A LITTLE PLATFORMING WITH your roleplaying? Or a smidgeon of melee combat with your character interaction? Or how about a bit of first-person shooting interspersed with piloting a spaceship to a new world? Do you yearn for the abolition of game genres? Well, Midway's ambitious upcoming *Haven* may be the answer to your prayers.

In keeping with contemporary game naming policy, *Haven* is suffixed with a colon and a completely redundant subtitle, *Call of the King*. The King in question remains mysterious, since it's an evil Lord by the name of Vetch who provides the game's villain. The Call of the title presumably refers to the Golden Voice, the great bell of prophecy our alarmingly wide-

eyed hero must ring in order to save the day. So far, so unremarkable. So what's the big deal?

Well, for a start, publisher Midway is calling its baby the "most expansive videogame of all time". By that they mean, there's a bloody big world to explore. Players will, it is alleged, travel through lava-filled subterranean mines, then race across oceans in jet-powered speedboats to pilot spaceships for interplanetary dogfights — and all without a break in gameplay. It's a bloody big seamless world, you see. Thanks to developer Travellers Tales' amusingly named T-Total technology, the gameworld is generated without any loading screen breaks or inter-mission interruptions. Which, in our books at least, sounds like a worthwhile achievement.

Haven will also feature multiple types of gameplay, thus necessitating players to draw upon a diverse range of abilities. From platforming and turret-based shooting to boat and land vehicle racing, arena combat and space exploration, it seems set to deliver on its promise to break down the barriers of traditional game genres. Whether such variety can gel together into a coherent and playable whole is a question we'll be asking when we receive reviewable code in the months ahead.

Midway also believes *Haven* is poised to transcend the boundaries of interactive technology. Say what? As much potential as there appears to be here, we readily admit to laughing at such a bold statement. Call us cynical if you must, but we're willing to take bets *Haven* does no such thing.



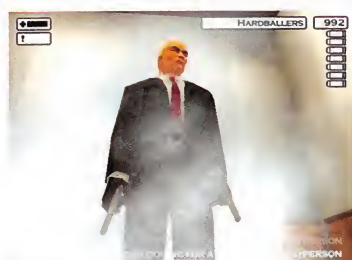
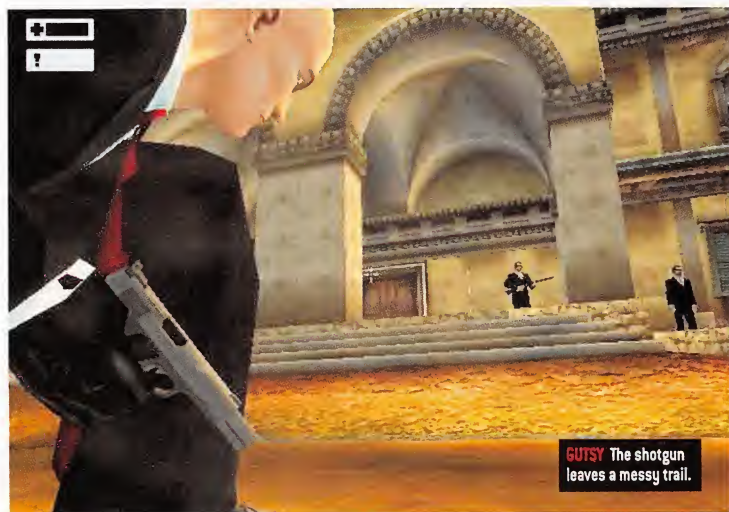
SURPRISE HIT OF THE YEAR?

NEW SCREENS! **HITMAN 2** CONTINUES TO IMPRESS.

■ BEHIND YOU

THE LATE SEPTEMBER RELEASE OF **HITMAN 2: SILENT ASSASSIN** LOOMS CLOSER, AND HAVING played an early version we're getting increasingly excited. So to celebrate, we're bringing you these brand new screens, just so you can see what we're talking about. Eidos's assassination game is all about stealth, cunning and multiple methods of murder – yes, plenty of games promise this kind of thing, but few deliver it in any convincing way. But the signs are good for *Hitman 2*, as our appropriately coldly-named 47 (that's Mr 47 to you) is looking very smooth and detailed in motion.

Our tests have revealed a genuinely amusing array of options once you're presented with the target: uniforms can be stolen from the likes of postmen and guards, guns can be smuggled via unsuspecting delivery men and every method between long range sniping and close-up chloroforming can be employed to subdue – or eliminate – defences surrounding the target. Annoyances from the PC-only original have been addressed with some apparent success, so it's now possible to save in-mission, and any weaponry you acquire remains with you indefinitely, rather than disappearing between levels. The action can be hectic if that's the way you want it, but it's the depth and opportunity for silent cunning that really appeals. That and the ability to drag almost disturbingly limp bodies out on to roofs and throw them off, of course. Keep this one in mind.



NO SMOKE WITHOUT... Fire! Don't shout this at him.

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DRAGGING IT OUT Corpses don't just disappear.

MIAMI MADNESS

THE FIRST SHOTS OF **GRAND THEFT AUTO: VICE CITY** ARE IN.

■ IT'S CRIMINAL

IT'S NOT QUITE WHAT WE WERE EXPECTING. In two ways. First, we didn't think Rockstar would be releasing any images of its shoe-in Christmas best-seller *GTA: Vice City* until the game was actually on shelves. *GTA3* had virtually no pre-release hype, so we anticipated even less for *Vice City*. It's not like they have to get people excited, is it?

Second, if they did give us an early glimpse of the Miami-based reiteration, we wouldn't have pictured it to look like this. Rollerblading

babes and golf buggies? What is Rockstar North (formerly known as DMA Design) smoking? And can we get some?

The palm trees do look cool though. However, the relevance of golf in a crime 'n' cars caper will be made explicit come late October. Stay tuned.



CARTLOAD OF CARS Just one of the new vehicles found in Vice City.



REAR VIEW We can't wait to do a drive-by here.



MY...GOD...WHAT...THE Hovering gardeners confused William Shatner.



LIKE ROBBIE And then I went and spoiled it all by slaying something stupid...



FEEL NO FEAR There's honour in death... oh please let me live!

NINJAS ARE THE NEW BLACK

NO LESS THAN THREE BIG NINJA TITLES ARE COMING YOUR WAY. THIS MIGHT NOT BE THE PRETTIEST OF THE LOT, BUT IT COULD BE THE MOST ENGROSSING. IT'S **TENCHU 3: WRATH OF HEAVEN**.

TRI HARD

DUE EARLY 2003, TENCHU 3: WRATH OF HEAVEN IS THE sequel to a pair of ugly – but highly entertaining – PSone games. The title eschews the predictable straight sword fighting for a more subtle blend of stealthy infiltration, quietly executed assassination attempts and... well, OK, straight sword fighting. The whole, however, was previously far more satisfying than the more usual ninja-based fighting games (such as Kengo), and we're not expecting that to change. This time we're promised more stealth attacks and basic fighting moves, and because these are ninjas, stealth can include ludicrous jumping attacks to reach your enemy before they can react... eat your heart out Solid Snake. There are even unusual combo

efforts to pull off some truly stylish stealth kills.

Mission objectives are pleasingly varied – sometimes you're required to indulge in a spot of espionage or theft beyond the more predictable assassination, and the game's ending alters depending on the decisions and actions of the player earlier on.

BIGGER BRAINS TO AIM AT

Perhaps predictably the AI is also claimed to be better, but more tangible is the challenge that three possible placements per enemy brings – players must stay on their toes even when replaying a level, as it won't be the same as before. Also intriguing are the multiplayer options to combat friends as opposing ninjas, or play co-operatively with abilities earned in single-player mode.



BACKYARD BLITZ The gardening ninja plans some covert landscaping.



SPY ON A WOOD THATCH ROOF Why don't the enemies ever look up?



THE NAME'S POND We're guessing, but things don't look too good for him.



FIGHTING FIT The gym's latest aqua-samurai courses were a success.

CROUCHING TIGER, HIDDEN DRAGON

THE MOST RECOGNISABLE NAME IN THE SLASHER BUSINESS.

■ FIGHT WITH YOUR KNEES BENT

IF YOU WANT TO MAKE A GAME ABOUT ninjas, this must surely be the best license to have; the Ang Lee film being one of the most popular martial arts movies of all time. It's also a fantastic excuse to give your characters insane superhuman powers of the highest order, and playable characters Mu Bai, Jen and Shu Lien have just that.

Each one has their own story arc as they fight for vengeance against Jade Fox, and success depends upon your acts of

ridiculous leapery and tree-top high kicking. Weapons include the apparently famous Green Destiny Sword, and the whole thing's steeping in the 19th century world of the award-winning film.

Whether this third-person action adventure can make a similar impact on games as the movie did on films remains to be seen, as does evidence of its 'innovative' nature. Still, we live in hope. *Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon* is in development by Genki, the people who brought us *Kengo*, and is scheduled for release in November.



CLAWS FOR THOUGHT This tiger bites. With a sword.



HIGH KARATE Why fight when you can just... fly away?



THE HIDDEN DRAGON It's right there, in the middle.

WAY OF THE SAMURAI

MADE BY A TEAM WITH REAL FORM IN ITS NINJA PAST, THIS HAS ALREADY TAKEN THE LAND OF THE RISING SUN BY STORM.

■ YOU KNOW THE DRILL

WAY OF THE SAMURAI IS ALREADY AVAILABLE in Japan, where it was number one in the gaming charts. Eidos is hoping for a positive reaction to this game in the west, and there's no reason why that shouldn't be the case. For a start, it's made by the team behind the original PSone *Tenchu* titles, Acquire.

Way of the Samurai is also, unsurprisingly, ninja-based, but the

emphasis is more on swordplay. As your wandering character is drawn into a fight between two factions, players find more than 40 swords that between them provide 200 attacks and stances. The whole thing is claimed to be genuinely non-linear, providing many paths to completion – it's a claim we've heard many times before, so we'll get excited when we see it.

Find out if Acquire can deliver a worthwhile ninja title later this year.



BLADE TO REST Featuring non-linear twatting.



TENCHU MOMENTS Is this the way of the samurai?



SWORD IT OUT How many ninja puns do we need?



I WANNA BE A SAMURAI The world's gone absolutely ninja crazy!



A LOAD OF BALLS (AND A LITTLE PUCK THING)

EA SPORTS' GOT GAMES. THREE OF 'EM TO BE PRECISE.

■ UPDATING

WELCOME SPORTS FANS. GRAB YOURSELF A bottle of Bud, pull up a bar stool and whoop loudly because EA Sports 2003 range of games is nearing completion. It might not know its golden goal from the score bag, but it knows its US sports better than most, which is lucky, because most of us here [Except March 'Madden' Stepnik - Ed] haven't got a clue.

For the majority of us the only time we yell about touchdowns, three pointers and face offs is when we're playing one of EA's long running *NBA*, *NHL* or *Madden NFL* series. We don't really care about all those stats and hot dogs, we just like a good bit of competitive sportiness. And our fave last year had to be the excellent *NHL 2002*. Beautiful looking, crammed with everything a puck-whacker could wish for and delightful to play, there wasn't much that needed changing, so EA has sensibly concentrated on perfecting the things that weren't quite spot on.

Game Breaker builds on the ability for a player to go 'in the zone'. Build up your power bar by scoring consecutive goals and you'll gain the ability to slow down the action, giving you the advantage in one on one situations.



PUCKER UP We went to a fight and an ice hockey...

The goalies are also much more intelligent, providing stern resistance to breakaways and making some spectacular desperation saves.

After 13 years of *Madden* games, EA's still finding new things to make this footy experience the most authentic yet. Apart from the usual *Madden* commentary, sound now covers the on-field action with the offensive and defensive calls audible over the obligatory oofs, whacks and thumping hits. The franchise mode has also been enhanced with the inclusion of a four game pre season where you get to evaluate the rookies and free agents before signing them up to your team.

Finally we've got *NBA Live 2003*. The biggest improvements have been lavished on the player's animations and movements. The players' react more realistically, responding to rebounds, running and shooting in one smooth motion to make the most of swift counter attacks and bumping and barging each other when things get a little heated. The players' skill, attributes, and animations will also mimic the hundreds of styles on show in the *NBA*. And if you've been following the sport since the days of big afros you can even unlock classic jerseys of your favourite teams.

All of these are predictably due in October.



POWER PLAY Oi, matey. Wanna get 'in the zone' with me?



AIR BALL. I pray to thee, my chocolate orange, let me fly.



THAT'S GOTTA HURT You can hear Madden, even in this picture.

THERE GOES YOUR NO CLAIMS BONUS

IGNORE THE NAME, **WRECKLESS** POSITIVELY ENCOURAGES YOU TO DRIVE LIKE A COMPLETE MANIAC AND CRASH MORE.

■ ROAD RAGE

THOSE XBOX GAMES KEEP ON COMIN'. THIS just happens to be one of the biggest selling of the lot, even knocking *Halo* off the top spot after just a week on sale in the US. Here're some *Wreckless* facts.

1 – You play as either an elite task force member trying to bring down the Hong Kong mafia or as a specialist agent trying to uncover links between the mafia and the police. 2 – You get to drive like a lunatic throughout the streets of Hong Kong. 3 – There're over 40 missions. 4 – You get to drive like a raving nutter across parks, down the pavement and even through shopping malls. 5 – The game's subtitled

The Yakuza Missions because whichever path you choose you've got a gang of Yakuza headcases on your ass the whole time. 6 – You get to drive like Stevie Wonder in a... you get the idea.



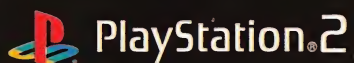
WE REALLY WANNA CHOP THOSE FINGERS It's the Yakuza!

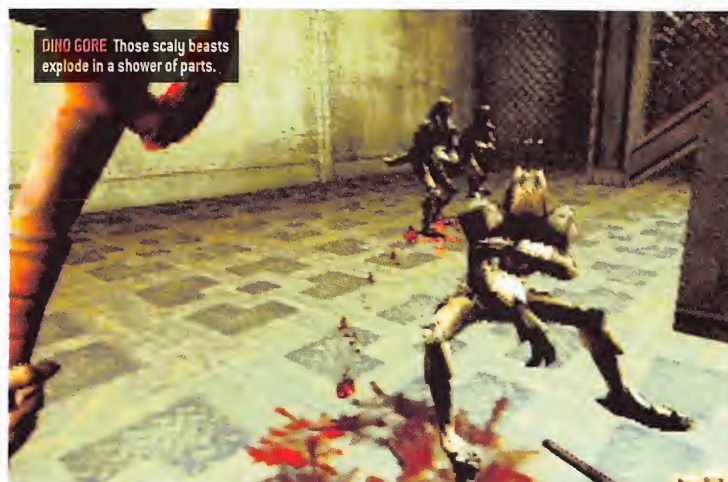
KICK IT
MARK IT
PLAY IT



Kick long bombs. Mark magnificent speccies. Play AFL Live™ 2003, the only footy game that takes you into the heart of the action. Play with all the players from the 2002 season. Choose from all 16 AFL teams. All with edge of seat commentary from Stephen Quartermain and Garry Lyon and tips and strategies from supercoach Kevin Sheedy.

www.acclaimau.com





LET'S ROK

THERE'S A WAR GOING ON AND **TUROK EVOLUTION** DUMPS YOU RIGHT IN THE THICK OF IT.

VICIOUS

MORE INFO ON THIS SHOOTER IS DRIP-FEEDING

its way to us courtesy of these exclusive new screens and the news that *TimeSplitters 2* isn't the only PS2 blaster with a wicked wedge of weapons. Having blown each other to bits with the ludicrously enjoyable new weapons *Spliters 2* has to offer (the deadly homing missile and scream inducing flamethrower are two particular faves at the moment) we're looking forward to the opportunity to get our hands on the juicy arsenal *Turok Evolution* has primed for action.

The cerebral bore from previous *Turok* games (it locked onto your opponent and

bored threw their head like a drill with a gratuitous zoomed-in camera displaying the carnage) is now joined by its bigger brother, the swarm bore. Just think of the damage this will do. The gravity disruptor beam can be used to cause all sorts of chaos and there's even a baby nuke for those moments when only complete and utter devastation will do. There will be over 30 weapons in the final game. Hopefully the shotgun will still come loaded with shredder ammo that tears apart your enemies from the inside out. Very messy.

It's just as well you've got so much destruction at your fingertips because this isn't just another of those one man escapades where you get to take on

allcomers with just a trusty rocket launcher at your side. This time you get to face off against an entire army of dinosaurs and prehistoric mutated beasts with a bunch of rebel soldiers fighting alongside you. It's not clear yet how much control you'll have over these forces but they're already displaying impressive intelligence with the ability to take cover, establish strategic positions and even surrender when things are stacked too heavily against them.

We'll have a more in-depth look at *Turok* next month when we give it the full PSW review treatment, and we'll be breaking out the multi-tap to give the multiplayer a good work out. Will *TimeSplitters 2* have to start looking over its shoulder?



DARK PLACES Cunning beasts will hide in the showers.



CHAIN ATTACK Any respectable armoury has a chaingun

"NOT GUILTY, YOUR HONOUR!"

MOD-CHIPS DECLARED LEGAL BY FEDERAL COURT

SONY VS STEVENS

THE CHIPS WERE CERTAINLY DOWN FOR SONY

recently as the Federal Court ruled against the consumer electronics giant and its claim that mod-chips constitute an effective breach of Australian copyright law.

In the case conducted by SCE Australia against Sydney based mod-chipper, Eddy Stevens, Federal Justice Ronald Sackville found that the installation and sale of mod-chips does not violate stipulations set out by the Copyright Act. Under the terms of this Act, it is illegal to override copy-protection devices so long as those devices have no other commercially significant purpose outside of protecting copyright. Supported by the ACCC as a 'friend of the court', Mr. Stevens successfully argued that his

activities were not in breach of these conditions because the copy-protection present on PlayStation consoles has commercial significance outside of copyright. Mod-chips, it was claimed, also override Sony's regional encoding device and allow consumers to exercise their right to import and play games from countries outside of official PAL territories.

"Mod-chipping does not constitute an act of piracy," ACCC representative Lin Enright told PSW. "We intervened as a friend of the court on behalf of consumers because we believe consumers have the right to import and play games from overseas on their consoles. Furthermore, the Copyright Act does not prohibit users from making legitimate backup copies of games they already own. You can't do it commercially of course, but mod-

chipping does not entail that."

"We're very pleased with the outcome of the case," she said.

SCE Australia is currently not giving interviews on this issue, but said in a statement that it was disappointed with the ruling and is currently considering an appeal.

"[We are] disappointed with the decision in this case which does not follow the recent decision in the UK. This case calls into question the value of the new provisions of the Copyright Act which were passed by Federal Parliament after a long period of consultation to deal precisely with this issue."

Meanwhile, general industry reaction to Justice Sackville's decision has been mixed. While some have expressed concern over the ruling and its implications for piracy,

others are pleased that this previously murky area of copyright legislation has finally been cleared up. Although mod-chips for the PlayStation2 are still a rarity in this country, it is likely that they will become more widely available now that the technology has gained legitimacy in the eyes of local lawmakers.

Aside from the mod-chip judgment, the court also found Stevens guilty of selling copies of unauthorised PlayStation software from his Sydney home. While Sony said that it was "pleased" with this aspect of the case, both Mr. Stevens and the ACCC have declined to comment on the matter.

PSW will of course endeavour to keep you up to date on any future developments as they come to hand.

MINIATURE MADNESS

A GAMING CLASSIC RETURNS. THE MICRO MACHINES ARE COMING TO PS2. LET BATTLE COMMENCE.

SHRINK SCRAPS

THE BRAVADO, BOASTING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL mind games have already begun at PSW. Everyone here has dabbled in a bit of *Micro Machines*' shrunken mayhem at one time or another. Whether it was on the SNES, Mega Drive, PC or PSone, everyone fancies themselves as a bit of a miniaturised motoring master. Fond reminiscences of dragster racing around bathtubs, hammer battles on the top of precariously placed lab stools and deviously knocking your rival down a snooker pocket on the last lap have been conjured up by these new screens because everything looks familiar, traditional, unspoilt and just how we remember the beautiful game to be. It's been an emotional experience seeing an old friend coming back into our lives.

As much as cynical old journos like us might pine for innovation, even we recognise that sometimes change is not always for the best when it alters the beauty and simplicity of something you've grown to master, love and cherish over months of multiplayer madness. So it's comforting to see these screens

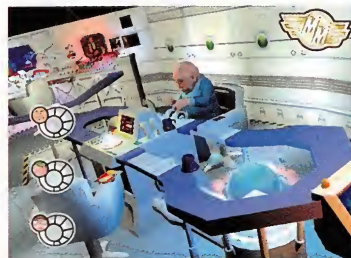


SOCIAL LIFE? Timesplitters 2 and this. It's all over...



displaying the latest version of *Micro Machines* in its familiar, almost retro splendour. We say bollocks to first-person views, cel-shaded frippery and pointless over-complications. We're supremely content with more of the same thank you very much. Hammers, speedboats, lily pads, table tops, giant cocks... erm, the poultry kind of course... all with the added detail and shine of the PS2 variety but with the same old classic feel, speed and idiot friendly controls.

With more tracks than the City Circle line, stupidly amusing power-ups and the usual collection of bizarre characters to choose from, the multi-tap will be your ticket to ruined friendships, late nights and the return of your wicked side when *Micro Machines* comes to PS2 this November.



THE RAT RACE The world is just one big car track.



BAD AS IN GOOD Oooh! Aren't retro things just fab?

WIN!

FIVE COPIES OF UBISOFT'S **UFC THROWDOWN**

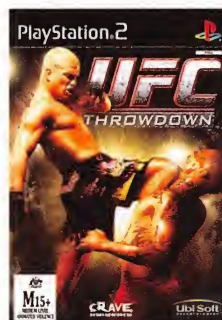
COMPETITION

THERE'S NOTHING LIKE PUMMELING A half-naked man around the ring... Hang on, let's start that again. *UFC Throwdown* is a fighting simulation modeled on the real man's alternative to the WWE, in which lycra-suited thugs punch each other's faces in. Repeatedly. We hear it's quite entertaining.

Promising to be far more enjoyable is the imminent videogame interpretation

from Ubisoft and Crave. Bloodsports tend to have considerable more appeal when the blood spilled isn't actually real. To celebrate this fact, Owen from Ubisoft has passed on five copies of *UFC Throwdown* for us to give away to five fortunate readers. Just write your hilarious answer on the back of an envelope. Make us laugh to win.

What name will you give your fighter in *UFC Throwdown*'s career mode?



Send your entry to:
Bloodsport For All
PSW
78 Renwick St
Redfern NSW 2016
Australia

GLOBEUNSIDER

BABY NEWS BORN OF GOSSIPING HIPS

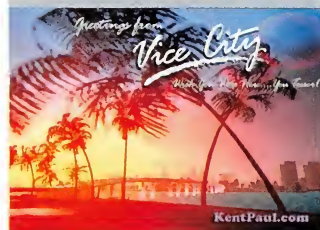


/ DEVIL MAY CRY 2

We're desperate for more info on this and what do we get? More screens. It's better than nothing I suppose. And if you've got one of those image enhancement things, that they always use in sci-fi films to identify the killer reflected in the TV screen, you could always spend a few hours studying this screen to see if you can glean any information on Dante's next PS2 outing.

/ CRASH TO THE MUSIC

V8 Supercars Race Driver follows in the footsteps of *Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX 2* with a list of licensed tunes for the soundtrack. It's not quite as comprehensive though with only six tracks so far. Al Green – *So You're Leaving*, Thin Lizzy – *Cowboy Song*, Lynyrd Skynyrd – *Sweet Home Alabama*, Morcheeba – *The Sea*, Iggy and the Stooges – *Search and Destroy* all feature. Unfortunately, so do Ash with *Death Trip 21*.



/ BRING BACK THE 80S

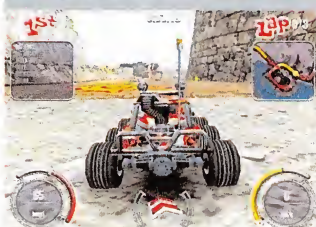
We can hardly wait for the follow up to our favourite game of last year. *GTA Vice City* even has its own dedicated spoof website that hints at the 80's vibe that will permeate the game when it's released late this spring. Check out www.kentpaul.com for a glimpse at the garish world that awaits.

/ DRIVER 3 IS GO

Finally the confirmation that we've all been expecting for quite some time. The follow up to two of the most entertaining driving games ever made is already in production. On the *Stuntman* disc we've discovered a trailer for *Driver 3*. What's more, the maker of the *Stuntman* and *Driver* games has said that it didn't want to rush into making *Driver 3* on PS2 until it was familiar with the new hardware. So *Stuntman* was obviously a *Driver* guinea pig then.

GLOBAL INSIDER

MEATY MORSELS OF GAMING INFO TO DIGEST



/ VIDEO THRILLS WITH RADIO CARS

Radio-controlled cars require far too much effort for the few minutes of fun before the batteries run out. They've always been an Xmas morning thrill that peters out by lunchtime. Thanks to *Smash Cars* we can forget all about bawling like a baby when Grandad treads on it, and concentrate on some nippy, miniaturised racing with huge jumps and clever interactive environments. It'll be ready for release this September.



/ TREASURE PLANET

Disney's new feature film gets the gaming treatment courtesy of Sony. The movie is based on the classic tale *Treasure Island* but with a difference. It's set in space amidst a backdrop of intergalactic pirates and a cyborg Long John Silver. No news as yet of what style the game will take. But we wouldn't bet against a platformer.

/ GET READY FOR OVERLOAD

Hot on the heels of the *Pokemon* phenomenon comes *Yu-Gi-Oh*. This card trading game has already taken over Japan with 7 million PS2 games sold and even a spin-off TV show. The card game is about to be unleashed on an unsuspecting (until now, that is) Australian public so expect the PS2 game to follow pretty swiftly. You might not know what *Yu-Gi-Oh* is right now, we guarantee you'll be absolutely sick of it in six months time.



MONSTER MAGIC Huge, gruesome but still waiting its turn.



STATO The stats make as much sense in Japanese.



LEGAIA MIND TRICK Use the Uri Gellar special to counter.

ONLY PULLING YOUR LEG-AIA

IS THIS THE REAL WORLD, IS THIS JUST FANTASY?

POINTY EARS

CLEARLY LEGAIA: DUEL SAGA IS AN RPG IN the *Final Fantasy* mould, and that's no bad thing. After the success of the latest in the *FF* series, you would have thought developers would have been queuing up to satisfy our lust for dragons and small warty creatures with horns. But no, we're

bombarded with pitiful tales of pixie-related rubbish.

Eidos hopes to change all this and quench our thirst for quality RPGs in one fell swoop. Although the storyline doesn't look like it will shame Dickens, the fighting is shaping up to be something special – the battles allow for highly technical fights while only using simple commands.

Although *Legaia 2* doesn't look to be breaking any new boundaries, the promised mini-games should keep you coming back for more. If Eidos can repeat the success it had with the original, if the battles live up to the hype and if the gameplay isn't dull, we could have a winner on our hands. Expect this hot little goblin sometime this spring.



NO MORE LONELY FIGHTS It's no battle against the clock.



SHOWBIZ Super special courses are all about spectacle.



SMASHING Rallying against a real car is much more fun.

THE DIRTIEST CONSOLE AROUND

THE PS2'S COLLECTION OF OFF-ROAD RACERS KEEPS GROWING. **RALLY FUSION** IS STARTING TO LOOK LIKE ONE OF THE BEST.

SLIDING

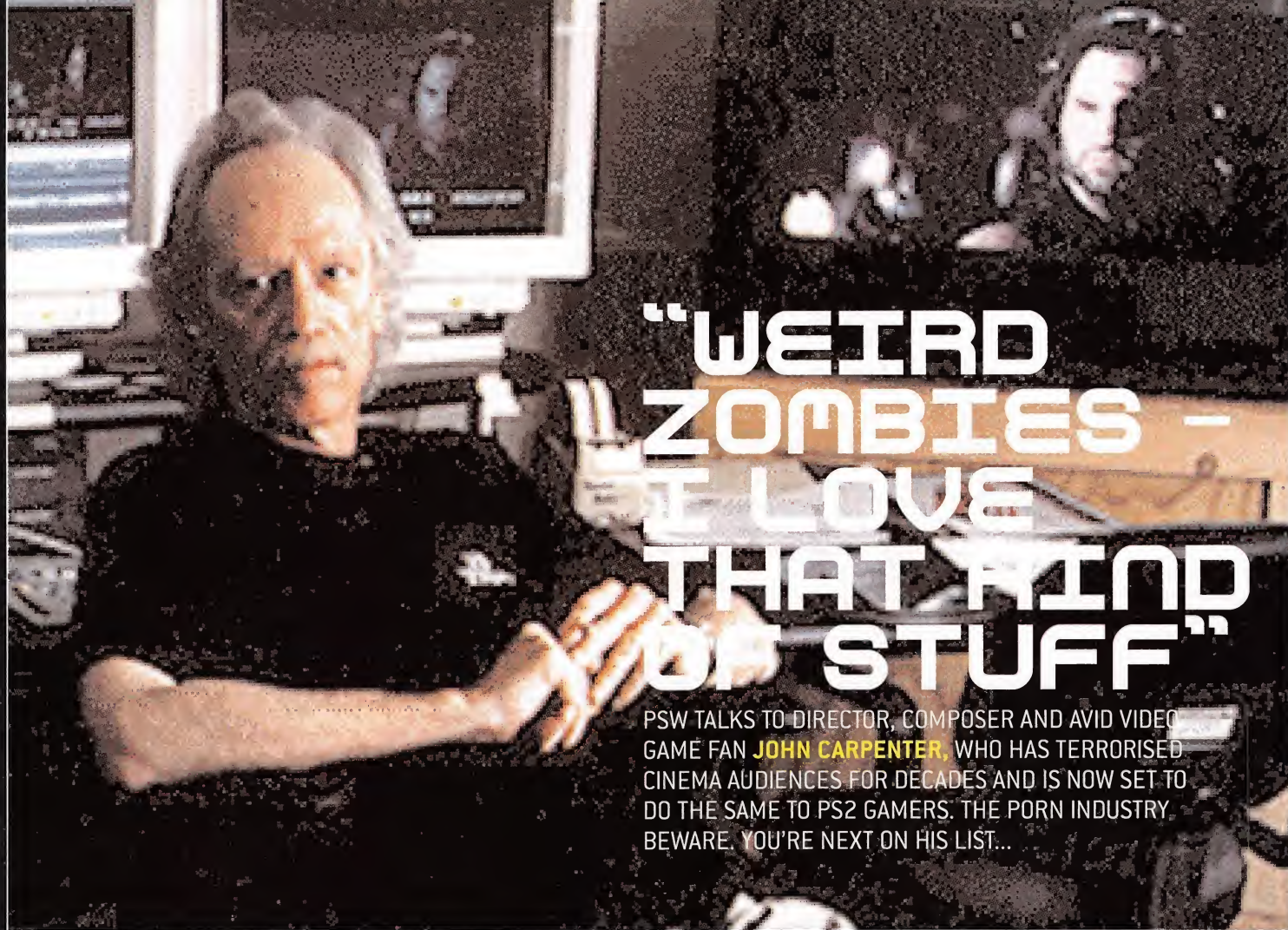
WRC, V-RALLY 3, GRAN TURISMO 3, RALLY Championship, Pro Rally, Master Rallye, Race of Champions... the list of PS2 gravel churners is growing by the month. Now *Rally Fusion* joins the off-road crowd. Well, that's not entirely true. *Rally Fusion* is in fact the new name for *Race of Champions*. We haven't got a clue why it's chosen to

rename the game because your aim is still to battle it out for the Race of Champions crown. But having had a play on this latest version, *Rally Fusion* doesn't deserve to be dismissed as another also-ran coughing on Mr McRae's tyre smoke.

With a classic collection of group B rally cars including the ludicrously powerful Audi Quattros and Lancia Deltas, *Rally Fusion* provides a pleasant alternative to those

Lancers and Imprezas that we see in every single carbon copy rally game. It also offers a bit of diversity in the highly competitive yet lonely world of PS2 rallying. Where other games pit you against imaginary drivers hidden behind a relentlessly counting clock, *Rally Fusion* chucks them onto the track alongside you for some bumper-to-bumper action. It can all get pretty heated too with one slightly over-aggressive manoeuvre ending up with your car rocketing off the side of a mountain for a spectacular demonstration of earth's gravitational power.

A selection of loop circuits and an abundance of special stages contrast the more common point-to-point rally stages, making *Rally Fusion* something of a dark horse coming up on the blind side of V-Rally and Colin McCrazy.



"WEIRD ZOMBIES - I LOVE THAT KIND OF STUFF"

PSW TALKS TO DIRECTOR, COMPOSER AND AVID VIDEO GAME FAN **JOHN CARPENTER**, WHO HAS TERRORISED CINEMA AUDIENCES FOR DECADES AND IS NOW SET TO DO THE SAME TO PS2 GAMERS. THE PORN INDUSTRY BEWARE. YOU'RE NEXT ON HIS LIST...

YOUR 1982 FILM, THE THING IS UNDERGOING SOMEWHAT OF A REVIVAL. HOW DID YOU INITIALLY GET INVOLVED WITH THE PROJECT?

At first I didn't want to remake *The Thing* because of my fondness for the original film which scared the hell out of me as a kid. Universal had the rights to remake it and so they approached me and asked if we could remake it in a different kind of way. I came up with the idea of going back to the original novella, *Who Goes There?*, by John W Campbell. Howard Hawk's 1951 movie, *The Thing from Another World*, had gotten rid of the imitative idea and a lot of that kind of material so I decided to return to those roots and basically reinvent the whole film.

WHAT IS IT ABOUT THE THING THAT YOU ARE MOST PROUD OF?

Well, *The Thing* is one of my favourite movies I've made. I don't think there's a movie quite like that film. It's one of the bleakest films ever made, it has a strange ending where you don't know quite what's happened and it's a very depressing kind of pessimistic view of humanity and its bleak future.

HOW ON EARTH DID YOU EXPLAIN YOUR VISION TO YOUR EFFECTS TEAM? THE LOOK FOR THE CREATURE MUST HAVE BEEN PARTICULARLY HARD TO PIN DOWN.

When we started the script only suggested horrors. It was almost the Lovecraft cliché of unspeakable horror. Well, we had to describe it. Rob Bottin approached me and he said this is a great opportunity - the Thing can look like anything. It doesn't have to look like one thing, it doesn't have

an original form, it imitates all the life forms it comes into contact with so we can have a field day with effects. That's basically the route we took.

KURT RUSSELL IS SOMEONE YOU GET ON WITH WELL AND SOMEONE YOU'VE USED IN MANY OF YOUR FILMS. WHAT IS IT THAT'S SO SPECIAL ABOUT HIM?

Sometimes you just respond to actors or actresses. I met Kurt in 1978 when we were doing a TV movie about Elvis in which he played the leading part and it was the way he approached roles, the way he saw acting and the way he saw movies. He was trained in the old Disney studios where they'd cut the camera if you didn't say your lines exactly right. He had old studio training and so he was absolutely the consummate professional and that just appealed to me. He is a highly underrated, brilliant actor.

ANOTHER RECENT DEVELOPMENT GIVES THE CHANCE TO PUSH THE FILM EXPERIENCE FURTHER. ALTHOUGH IT'S NOT A REMAKE, THE NEW VIDEOGAME BASED ON THE THING DOES DEFINITELY TAKE THE BEST ELEMENTS OF YOUR FILM AND MAKE THEM WORK IN A NEW WAY FOR A NEW AUDIENCE. MOST WILL NOT HAVE EVEN SEEN THE ORIGINAL. WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT YOUR FILM BEING BUILT UPON LIKE THIS?

I think it's great, you know back then we had no idea that something like a computer game would exist. There was *Pong* and I saw some crude and rudimentary computer animation, but back in the old days it didn't look too promising but lo and behold here we are. The technology just keeps getting more and



ICE MAGIC It looks like it's Kurt-ains for him.



DUH! "I said just a bit off the sides, now I look stupid."

more advanced and in-depth and photo-realistic and more and more fun to play. I'm a videogame addict - my son and I play all the time. There's a genre of videogames that I really dig where you are entering a certain place and there's evil about - it could be weird zombies or crazy creatures running about - and you kill 'em and shoot 'em and it's great fun to do. I love that kind of stuff.

ANOTHER THING THE GAME HAS TRIED TO DO IS TO EMULATE THE MOOD AND STYLE OF THE FILM. A LOT OF THAT IS ACHIEVED WITH MUSIC, FOR WHICH YOU HAVE A PARTICULAR AFFINITY WITH.

Well the score for *The Thing* was composed



3'S UP "Come on stop teasing, are you both aliens?"



SONIC SPOOK DUM DUM cha, cha, DUM DUM cha...

by Ennio Morricone, who is a brilliant and visionary composer.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE FILMS THAT SO OBVIOUSLY DON'T WORK, SUCH AS THE HALLOWEEN SEQUELS?

I don't want to comment too much on the films but they give me this nice cheque every time they make one and I'm very appreciative. It's very nice - I'm a capitalist you know - I enjoy making lots of money!

EVER WANTED TO MOVE OUT OF THE SCI-FI/HORROR GENRES?

[Laughs] Straight into pornography - that's where I'm headed.

OUTBACK SURVIVOR

THIS MONTH WE GO BUSH IN SEARCH OF THE RARE AUSTRALIAN GAMES DEVELOPER AND FIND ROBERT WALSH FROM QUEENSLAND'S KROME STUDIOS, CREATOR OF EA'S **TY THE TASMANIAN TIGER**.

■ INTERVIEW

SO, FIRST OF ALL, HOW DID YOU GET THE GIG WORKING ON TY FOR EA?

Ty is actually a creation of Krome. We spent about nine months of constant designing, prototyping, and many trips to EA get the final go ahead.

DID YOU UNDERTAKE ANY EXPEDITIONS INTO THE "OUTBACK" IN THE NAME OF RESEARCH? ARE THERE ANY FAMILIAR LANDMARKS OR LOCATIONS THAT FEATURE IN THE GAME?

A lot of the team has come from all over Australia - from Tasmania to North Queensland - so a lot of us have grown up with the Australian bush and beach. Some of the design team visited the Great Barrier Reef, the outback and a lot of the local Queensland Rainforests. Additionally there is a lot of cool resources and publications on Australia.

GIVEN THE INTERNATIONAL MARKET YOU'RE SELLING TO, IS THERE A DANGER OF US FINDING THE THEME TOO STEREOTYPICAL?

No, the game isn't too stereotypical. As we know Australia is a well-received and well-liked country around the world, it's known as the lucky country and this will work well for us.

ARE THERE ANY IN-JOKES THAT ONLY AUSTRALIAN GAMERS WILL APPRECIATE?

There is a fair amount of Aussie slang that will give the Australian player a wry smile, but we think the international market will pick up on it fairly quickly. We expect to hear a lot of American kids saying "G'day clobber, Mate" etc.

DOES THE GAME BORROW MUCH FROM ABORIGINAL DREAMTIME MYTHOLOGY?

Not overly, we drew some inspiration from the culture that is associated with the mythology, i.e. that the dreamtime is a mystical place.

WHAT SETS TY APART FROM YOUR REGULATION PLATFORM HERO?

Boomerangs and the environments! Ty has a pair of super cool boomerangs that he can upgrade. These act as both weapons and tools. For example, the Frostyrang can freeze enemies but can also be used to create ice platforms that Ty can use as bridges across rivers. Also, the Aussie environment is extremely unique and is something that has never been seen in a game before. We've gone to great extremes to give our levels an amazing level of detail and life.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT BEING AN AUSTRALIAN DEVELOPER WORKING ON AN AUSTRALIAN-THEMED GAME? IT'S CERTAINLY A RARE COMBINATION.

We feel extremely proud. Firstly because the idea and intellectual property are our own creation, and secondly we have the largest publisher in the world backing us one hundred percent.

FINALLY, TELL US WHY WE SHOULD BE EXCITED ABOUT TY COMING TO PS2.

Ty has drop dead gorgeous visuals, compelling characters and story, amazingly smooth animation, really cool boomerangs, but most importantly it has super addictive gameplay.



LOUNGE LIZARD Well, yar boo sucks to you, too.



LIKE A TIGER Too much of this will surely Ty-re him out.



SMIGGINS Ty does his bit for our Winter Olympics bid.



BILLABONG You can skim stones, but can you skim a boomerang?



ROCK AND ROLL Not even Indiana Jones faced boulders that big.

NEED AN ORIGINAL NAME?

GAME NAMES ARE MOSTLY COPIED FROM FILMS, IT OCCURRED TO US WHILE WATCHING CHANNEL 5 RECENTLY. THINK WE'VE TOO MUCH TIME ON OUR HANDS? PERHAPS. BUT HERE, JUST LOOK AT THEM ALL.

FREQUENCY

THE FILM / Starring Dennis Quaid, James Caviezel (2000). Time-travelling tale linking dead dad to wireless-loving son. Son tries to save dad, things go bad. Paradoxes involved.

THE GAME / Press buttons to trigger music in plasma-green audio tunnels. We can say with great certainty that it was not inspired by the movie.

SIMILARITY SCORE: 1/5
Both contain sound



READY 2 RUMBLE

THE FILM / Starring David Arquette, Oliver Platt (2000). Real wrestlers team up with real actors to portray fake story of wrestling promoters gone bad.

THE GAME / Comedy boxing in such a colourful, comedy style you might be forgiven for thinking it's from Sega. It's not, it's from Midway. Good though.

SIMILARITY SCORE: 2/5
Pretend fighting features in both



DRIVER

THE FILM / Starring Ryan O'Neal, Bruce Dern (1978). Superb getaway driver makes an enemy in a high place. Dern's detective wants him stopped. Chases ensue.

THE GAME / Proto-GTA3 featuring city-based vehicle carnage. The sequel had running around bits – but they weren't particularly good. Hard, but nice.

SIMILARITY SCORE: 4/5
Cars, shooting, cops. Close



THE GETAWAY

THE FILM / Starring Steve McQueen, Ali McGraw (1972), Alec Baldwin, Kim Basinger (1994). So good they made it twice. Albeit not as well the second time around.

THE GAME / Oft-delayed London crime sim, that mixes elements of *Grand Theft Auto 3* with elements of *Grand Theft Auto 3*, combining elements of *Grand Theft Auto 3*.

SIMILARITY SCORE: 2/5
Lots of cars. Similarities end



SONS OF LIBERTY

THE FILM / Starring Claude Rains, Gale Sondergaard (1939). America revolution yarn. Contains no stealth. See also: *Johnny Tremain* and *the Sons of Liberty* (1957).

THE GAME / [*Metal Gear Solid 2*]. Stealth on a ship, lead character replaced by infinitely less popular lead character unbeknownst to all. With hindsight – a bad move.

SIMILARITY SCORE: 0/5
Officially zero share



VAMPIRE NIGHT

THE FILM / Starring Jimmy German, Eden Rae (2000). Cute girl runs off to Hollywood, meets lady vampires, gets in scrapes, requires rescuing. Fairly sexy.

THE GAME / Vampirical shooting game set in infested East-European village. Sadly doesn't feature the babe-vampires of the film, just men. Not sexy at all.

SIMILARITY SCORE: 0/5
Ends at the title



SOLDIER OF FORTUNE

THE FILM / Starring Clark Gable, Susan Hayward (1955). Hong Kong military escape-escapade, pitching Gable as romantic rescuing hero.

THE GAME / Ludicrously violent dismemberment simulation, featuring guns, blood, men and various horrific and unnecessary combinations of all three.

SIMILARITY SCORE: 1/5
People die in both



COMMANDOS

THE FILM / Starring Lee Van Cleef, Jack Kelly (1968). Americans disguised as Italians go on infiltration mission, with unsurprisingly violent consequences.

THE GAME / [*Commandos 2*]. Not the sequel to the movie, but an entirely unrelated WW2 ultimate stealth war sim. With equally violent consequences.

SIMILARITY SCORE: 4/5
Both ideal for hard men



WIN!

TWO COPIES OF ACTIVISION'S **BLADE 2** – PLUS THE MOVIE ON DVD

COMPETITION

THE BLADE MOVIES HAVE SURPRISED everyone with their enormous success – who'd have thought a once-forgotten comic book hero could turn into a hugely popular film franchise? It's not only Wesley Snipes who must be smiling smugly right now, but Activision too, whose investment in the licensed videogame will be paying dividends come its late September release.

Courtesy of the kind Kristy at Activision we've got two copies of the all-action, roaming brawl of a game, plus two copies of the not-yet-released *Blade 2* on DVD. Two lucky readers will win one of each, as long as they answer the following question on the back of an envelope:

Who is the developer (not the publisher) of the Blade 2 PS2 game?

Send your entry to:
Blade 2 comp
PSW
78 Renwick St
Redfern NSW 2016
Australia



POSTURING Wesley's chiropractor would be proud.



NO PARKING This is why we don't park at Broadway shops.



BALLETIC VIOLENCE Wesley's clearly proud of his pert arse, too.

Otaku Alley

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN JAPAN?

Welcome to the weirder side of PlayStation gaming. Otaku Alley is devoted to keeping you up to date on all the Japanese gaming goodness that's fit to print. Here you'll find news and previews on all the best games, soundtracks, figurines and other assorted goodies to come out of the great Land of the Rising Sun. If it's Japanese and PlayStation related, you'll find it here – and if you don't, drop us a line at psw@next.com.au and tell us what we're missing out on.

/DANIEL STAINES



TIME OUT Although not shown here, you can chat during a fight to boost your attacks.



MR FLOPPY The hair styles are a winner in our books.



Houshin Engi 2

- GENRE: RPG
- PUBLISHER: Koei
- CHANCE OF LOCAL RELEASE

25%

■ 'Houshin Engi', roughly translated, means 'hunter of souls' and refers to an ancient Chinese myth from which Koei's latest RPG takes no small amount of influence. The game is set within the realms of traditional oriental folklore and

features all the cool things that have made Chinese mythology all the rage of late. Dragons, warrior monks, ancestral spirits – the whole kit and kaboodle. In addition, *Houshin Engi 2* also sports a very intriguing battle system. The specifics of it

are kind of vague at present, but from what we've gathered it appears that individual party members actually communicate with each other during combat using real spoken dialogue. The more given characters talk to each other

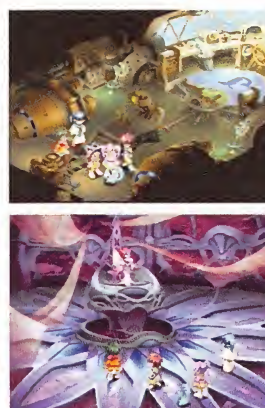
while fighting, the more skilled they become at dealing out devastating combo attacks. If that isn't reason enough to give the game more than a passing glance, just check out the screenshots. Pretty swank, we're sure you'll agree?



ROLL OUT THE CARPET But not in Australia, where this probably won't be released.



ROOF ROMANCE Oooh, how sweet!



SUPERDEFORMED Cute as a button.



Tales of Destiny 2

- GENRE: RPG
- PUBLISHER: Namco
- CHANCE OF LOCAL RELEASE

40%

■ The original *Tales of Destiny* game was actually fairly successful in Japan and Namco ticked off more than a few Aussie RPGers when they failed to release it locally. The follow-up, creatively titled *Tales of Destiny 2*, looks similarly

enticing and just as unfortunately unlikely to get a PAL release. This frustrates us immensely, because *ToD 2* has almost everything we like in a good Japanese RPG. There's an incredible battle system with a strong focus on

strategy instead of simple levelling up. There's an engaging plot populated by a diverse and colourful cast of characters. There's even, from what we've heard, a snazzy soundtrack. Of course, the visuals could use a bit of

improvement, but one can't ask for everything. As with a lot of good PS2 games, a local release will depend on success in Japan and America – so here's hoping that sales go through the roof.



MISCARRIAGE Can we get Tokyo trains in Sydney?



BEST CONTROLLER EVER Yes indeedly.



MORE TRAINS This time they're identical.



YET MORE TRAINS Can we go home now?

Densha de Go! chapter of Ryojo

● **GENRE:** Tram Driving Sim
● **PUBLISHER:** Taito
● **CHANCE OF LOCAL RELEASE**
0.1%

Despite the fact that train driving is arguably one of the least exciting careers available to video game simulation, Taito's *Densha de Go!* train simulators have found a success in Japan which continues to grow with each new instalment. This latest episode, *Chapter of Ryojo*, focuses on

trams and comes replete with a special streetcar's control panel – right down to the little knobs and everything. On top of that, the game features a vast array of in-game options that are sure to keep even the most anal tram enthusiast happy. So if

you get a thrill out of riding on public transport but lack the raw ambition to go to tram school, then perhaps you should consider tracking down a copy of *Densha de Go! Chapter of Ryojo*. It's the game that you and the 3 other non-Japanese people like you have been waiting for!



YYING FOR AFFECTION We think they're discussing their date tonight.



SIM VILLAGE Isometric fans, rejoice!



MAGIC THE DATING Court a giant robot!

Haruka 2: Romance of Eternity

● **GENRE:** Mech/ RPG Dating Sim
● **PUBLISHER:** Koei
● **CHANCE OF LOCAL RELEASE**
0%

This one's actually been out since February in Japan, but it's just so darn good 'n' kooky that we couldn't resist giving it a mention here. *Hakura 2: Romance of Eternity* tells the tale of a young schoolgirl who is transported into a mysterious world and compelled to fend for herself against

the forces of evil. She does this by blowing stuff apart with a giant mech during the day and dating some totally hunky army officers at night. So yes, it's a RPG/dating-sim hybrid aimed at the Japanese girl who likes to mix a busy schedule of shooting robots with some hardcore courtship and

clothes shopping. Despite how weird it sounds, we've played the original *Haruka* PC game and found it pretty enjoyable in those sections where we actually knew what the hell was going on. Of course, *Haruka 2* has no chance in hell of ever being released here.

OTAKUINSIDER

Old, OLD School Final Fantasy due for PSX

In a move that shocked no one, Square has recently announced that remakes of the original two *Final Fantasy* games will be appearing on the PS One in the near future. Originally appearing on the 8-bit NES, Square had already spruced up the games for their revival on the now-flailing WonderSwan Colour system and it appears the PS One versions will be direct ports with some added CG thrown in a la *Final Fantasy Anthologies*.

Atlus Announces Shin Megami Tensei for PS2

Though many feared it wouldn't happen, Atlus has revealed that a PS2 version of its *Shin Megami Tensei* franchise is on its way and may be released by early next year. For those not in the know, the *Shin Megami Tensei* games are a decidedly Japanese brand of kooky RPGs set in modern times. They enjoy a cult following and fans have been hankering for this latest game for a good while now. Look out for it.

PocketStation Goes Bye-bye

Does anyone out there remember the PocketStation? It was a bizarre little add-on Sony made for the original PlayStation that only saw the light of day in Japan. RPG enthusiasts imported it so they could do things like get hidden Chocobos in *Final Fantasy VIII*, which was basically the only game released here that damn thing could be used for. At any rate, Sony has announced that they will no longer be producing it. Oh well.

Dialogue



OOH, WE'VE GOT LETTERS. FROM READERS, EVEN. PUTTING OUR EMAIL ADDRESS IN THE MAG HELPED!



ONIMUSHA 2 Not as interesting as Burnout 2, according to Neil Hankle.

/THE OLDER ONES

I wanted a PlayStation2 magazine, I didn't want to pay lots of dollars and I wanted Australian. I got PSW! *(That's a compliment, I think - Ed.)*

The first edition is pretty good. I'm looking for the next edition. Just don't forget that not all people can keep up buying newer games and they often go for the older ones that have come down in price. Reviews and hints/cheats on these games would be appreciated, e.g. *Resident Evil: Code Veronica X*, *Crazy Taxi*, *Timesplitters*, etc.

I hope you are considering Letters, Competitions (and none of those stupid "In twenty words...") and, as I mentioned, older stuff, too.

I'm sure you will make a good magazine even better as time goes on. Keep up the good work.
C. Hensley
Burnie, Tas

I hope our Budget reviews section satiates your hunger for "older stuff". Platinum games tend to sell extremely well (sometimes even better than at full-price), so it'd be silly for us not to feature them. Letter and competitions have also, obviously, been taken care of, too.

/GRID AND ABILITY

Hey! Great to see another PlayStation mag spring up. Variety is the spice of life after all. My questions revolve around recent reviews read about the latest instalment of the never-ending *Final Fantasy* series. I read in one that *FFX* went through the "same" turn-based battles. Yet in starting the game myself I've found the battle mode very different from *FF8* and *FF9*. Is it just bad games journalism? Did I miss something in

the last two games? Was the Sphere Grid and ability to swap characters mid battle part of previous *FF* games? Well good luck with PSW. I hope to become a regular reader.

CLOUD,
via email

Clearly you didn't get your information from PSW, since all the bad games journalism happens elsewhere. *FFX* is definitely a case of Square evolving the series, which may have disappointed some hoping the first *FF* outing on PS2 might have seen a bigger step forward. Still, you're right, there are some obvious differences in the basic game mechanics

between *FFX* and previous versions. Though those who only played the press demo distributed by Sony may not have noticed them before writing their "authoritative" reviews.

/THE TREND TOWARDS

It seems that all games these days are cross console and the words "exclusive to [insert console here]" appears on very few games. I bought my PS2 very early in the console wars and so far have been impressed with the ongoing supply of new games. But could tell me what game you see as the next big thing on PS2? Is the trend towards or away from more exclusive titles for PS2? And what exclusive titles will be coming to PS2 in the not so distant future?

Steve,
via email

Without wanting to get drawn into any "console war" debate, let me just say the PS2 is in an enviable position at the moment and for the foreseeable future. Almost every game developed outside of Nintendo or Microsoft's in-house teams is coming to PS2, and many of them exclusively. If you can only buy one console, then the PS2 is the only rational option. It's as simple as that.

As for upcoming exclusive titles? Try *GTA: Vice City*, *GTA4*, *FFXI*, *Devil May Cry 2*, *The Getaway*, *Ratchet & Clank*, *Tomb Raider: Angel of Darkness*, and the list goes on.

/AIRPORT BAGGAGE CARRIER

Will there ever be a proper driving simulator where the player can drive anything from a bicycle to an SUV or an airport baggage carrier? It could have a championship mode, and be able to unlock special vehicles. There could also be another mode where the player has to park the vehicle in several



CRAZY TAXI C Hensley says Platinum releases should be reviewed. We do, too.

MISCELLANEOUS CUTS

What's the main character's name in *GTA3*?
Paul Robinson,
via email

He doesn't have one, oddly enough.

Can you tell me how to fly a helicopter in *GTA3*?
Paul Robinson,
via email

You can't. Honest. And anyone who told you otherwise is a liar.

Do you have any cool cheats for *GTA3*?
Paul Robinson,
via email

No. Cheats aren't cool.

How do you fly the Dodo properly in *GTA3*?
Paul Robinson,
via email

Er... sigh. With tremendous patience. Holy ironie!

Can you send me a copy of the uncut version of *GTA3* so I can pick up a hooker?
Paul Robinson,
via email

Aaargh!



SEND YOUR THOUGHTS TO:
Dialogue
PSW
78 Renwick St,
Redfern NSW 2016.
psw@next.com.au

different areas to be able to attempt to park the next vehicle. How about it, good idea or not?

Ben Simmons,
via email

Fairly bad, to be honest. Parking is a tiresome and awkward chore at the best of times, and not one that really deserves to be immortalised in a videogame. Mind you, if they can make an interesting game out of Formula 1 then anything's possible.

/COMPULSORY WOODLAND

I am extremely excited about *Burnout 2*. Please feed me more information, lest I starve and have to make do with an inferior news story. Like *Onimusha 2*, about which I have already read way too much. Please stop covering the sequel now – the first *Onimusha* was boring, and to my mind nothing set in 'Feudal Japan' ever turns out to be interesting, what with all the compulsory woodland sequences and boring discussions about honour. If I wanted boring discussions about honour I'd watch one of the Lieutenant Worf episodes of *Star Trek: The Next Generation* where he visits his home world and has to face the Klingon High Council. God, those episodes are boring. Shall I stop now? I could carry on like this all day.

Neil Hankle,
via email

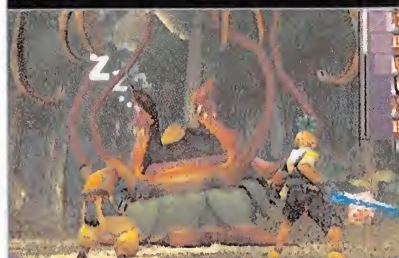
We hope you enjoy the trio of (no doubt, inferior) news stories across pages 12 and 13. And, really, only the Lt Worf episodes are boring?

/MARTIAL ARTIST MYSELF

I have tried phoning but couldn't get through. Please cover *Pride FC* from THQ, it's the most realistic fighting game ever and the one-hit KOs are amazing. Sanders Keel, one of the guys behind the game, actually



FINAL FANTASY X Boasts the best breasts in the entire series.



listens to what the fans want, unlike Crave and their crappy *UFC* game. Being a martial artist myself I will beat you up unless you cover it...

Neil Allen,
via email

Yikes. We hear from THQ that *Pride FC* has slipped down the release schedule, possibly even as late as the beginning of next year. So we won't cover it just yet. Will you stop threatening us now? Please?

/REGULARLY CHOKING

I read with interest your preview of the new *AFL* game in *PSW#2*; in fact, it was with more than interest, it was incredible excitement. Until, that is, I noticed the name Kevin Sheedy and his association with the game. This could pose a bit of a problem. Will his input



mean that your team constantly under-performs, particularly during finals time, regularly choking in the Grand Final? Will it mean your team consistently loses out in the ruck? Will your star player always, always, always get injured at exactly the wrong time of the season? Please tell me it's not true.

By the way, I'm not much of an Essendon fan.

Stephen Cole,
via email

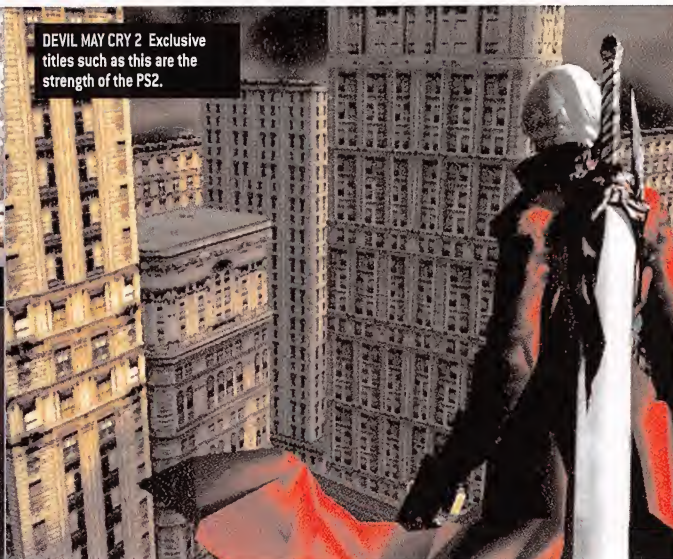
I think you're being a bit harsh of poor old Sheeds. His longevity as a coach and enviable record of success over that time speak for themselves. Sure, Essendon have under-achieved at times, but few teams can match their record over the past few seasons. Just be thankful Acclaim didn't ask Rodney Eade to help them out.



DEVIL MAY CRY Coming to Platinum later this year.



DEVIL MAY CRY 2 Exclusive titles such as this are the strength of the PS2.



SPOOKY Another excuse to print some DMC2 shots.





NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE



15+ PERSONS UNDER 15 YEARS
MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY
A PARENT OR ADULT GUARDIAN
SEXUAL REFERENCES

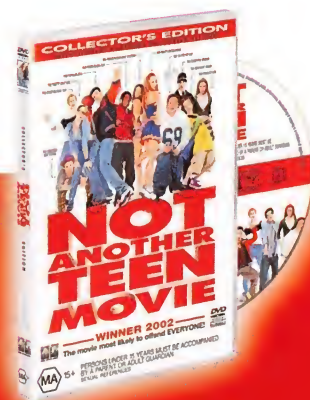


From the writers of *Scary Movie* comes the outrageous hit comedy that spoofs nearly every teen movie ever made. Packed with hours of hilarious special features including deleted scenes, audio commentaries, interactive game, Marilyn Manson music video and the crazy original ending.



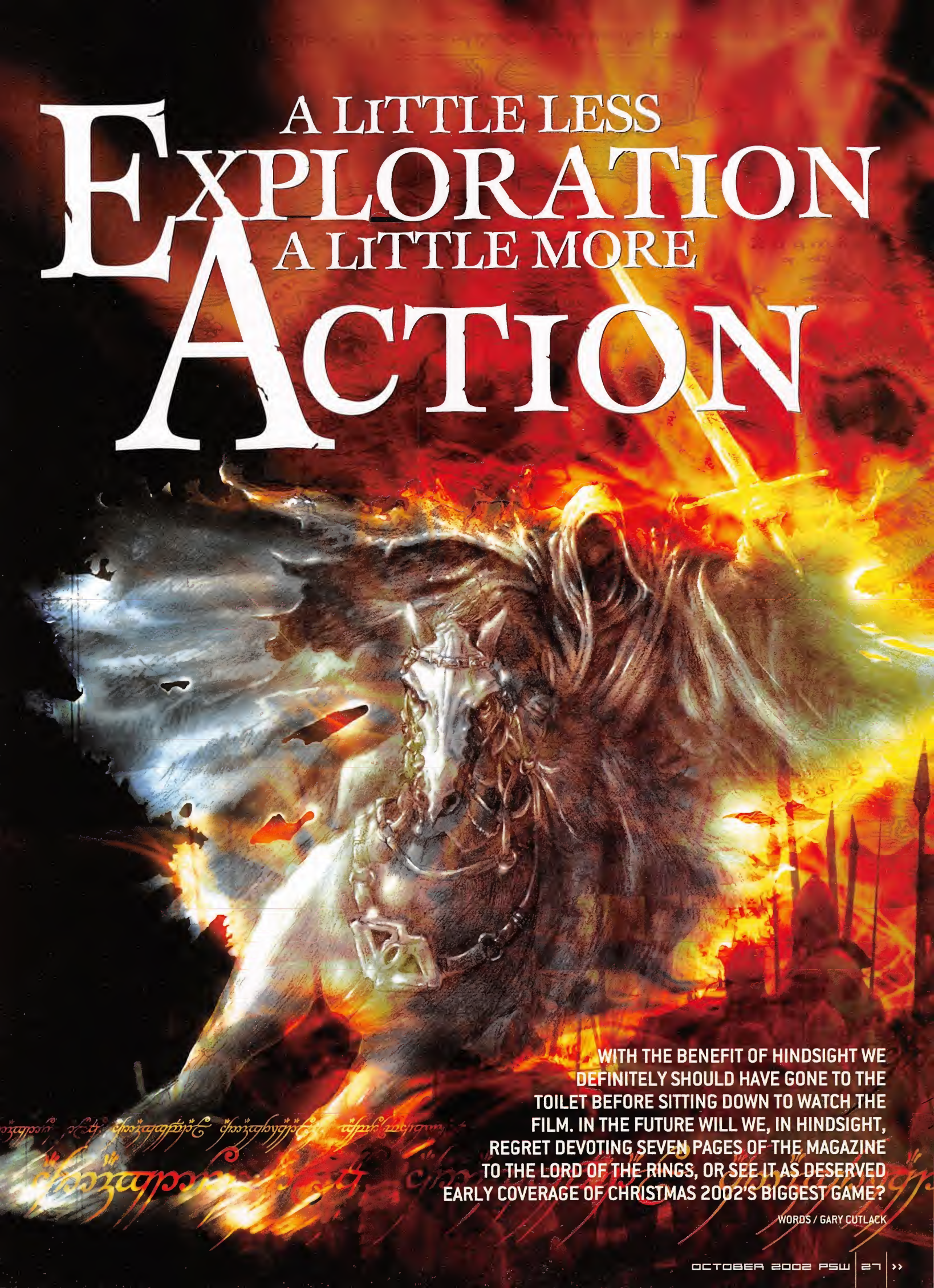
COLUMBIA
PICTURES

BRING IT HOME. BRING IT ON.



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W020 - 1/02/02



A LITTLE LESS EXPLORATION A LITTLE MORE ACTION

WITH THE BENEFIT OF HINDSIGHT WE DEFINITELY SHOULD HAVE GONE TO THE TOILET BEFORE SITTING DOWN TO WATCH THE FILM. IN THE FUTURE WILL WE, IN HINDSIGHT, REGRET DEVOTING SEVEN PAGES OF THE MAGAZINE TO THE LORD OF THE RINGS, OR SEE IT AS DESERVED EARLY COVERAGE OF CHRISTMAS 2002'S BIGGEST GAME?

WORDS / GARY CUTLACK

THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE TWO TOWERS



YOU CANNOT GO NORTH. Men.
Always with the swords.



MONSTAH The bigger they are
the higher the energy bar.



RING PULL? Go back to the
shop and buy a tin opener.



I APPEAR TO BE SURROUNDED
The classic 3D fight scenario.



STAB IN THE PARK "Yeah, but
words will never harm me."

**/ YOU CAN
ONLY GET
SO FAR BY
SIMPLY
MASHING
BUTTONS
IN THIS
GAME /**

WHETHER YOU LIKED IT OR NOT WAS IMMATERIAL, FACT IS JUST ABOUT EVERY ACTIVE CINEMA-GOER IN THE COUNTRY WENT TO SEE THE LORD OF THE RINGS, WITH ALMOST ALL OF THEM MANAGING TO GET THROUGH IT WITHOUT NEEDING A TOILET BREAK. AND, IF ALL GOES ACCORDING TO PLAN, ELECTRONIC ARTS WILL BE ON THE RECEIVING END OF MANY \$100 LUMP SUMS COME THIS NOVEMBER, AS ITS GAME – PROPERLY TITLED THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE TWO TOWERS – ARRIVES ON PLAYSTATION2.

Despite the name suggesting that the game is based purely on the second part of the trilogy, it actually draws on the stories, locations and characters from the first two films (or books, if you're that way inclined). Being the naturally inquisitive sort of person that reads the word bits of games magazines as well as looking at the screenshots, no doubt several questions have sprung into your curious, information-sponge of a mind. So let's bring in an expert. Let's ask *LotR's* (as we shall refer to it to save precious magazine space) senior producer and co-director Scott Evans to fill us in on everything to do with everything: "Our game is entitled *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*. The gameplay spans the story of the first two films – *The Fellowship of the Ring* and *The Two Towers*," says Evans, helpfully.

It's hoped that many movie fans will be tempted by the game in the hope of seeing film footage and locations ahead of the film's December release. Plus, Electronic Arts is probably also hoping a whole world of mums and grannies will be buying anything with *Lord Of The Rings* stamped on it for their kids this Christmas. But is it authentic, or has it just stuck the logo onto any old mediaeval-style combat game? That's a good question, and one we put to Scott Evans thus:

DOES THE STORY CONFORM TO TOLKIEN'S ORIGINAL? DOES IT COVER THE FIRST TWO BOOKS IN THEIR ENTIRETY?

The gameplay spans the story of the first two films. As such, there's an incredible amount of material available to base a game upon. In fact, our first challenge was to pick and choose from some of the most awesome film sequences ever created! After our locations, characters, etc were chosen, we then started to pour over every detail imaginable to make certain that our game closely matches Middle Earth.

HOW MANY WEAPONS DO YOU HAVE, AND WHAT TYPES?

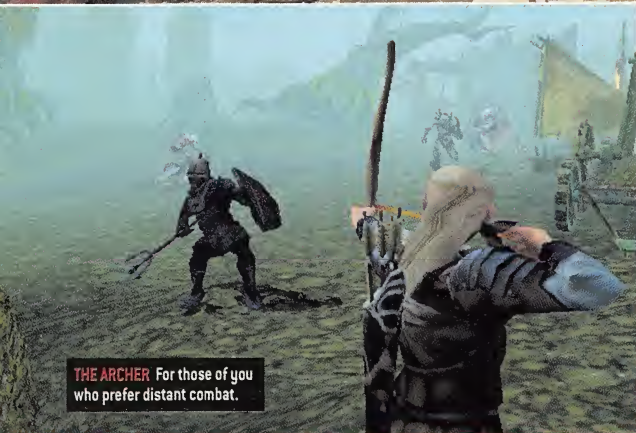
Each of the three playable characters has specific weapons as portrayed in the films. Aragorn uses his sword and has his bow as a ranged weapon. Legolas primarily uses his bow, but has Elven fighting knives for melee combat. Gimli uses his two-bladed Dwarven axe, and also has throwing axes for ranged opportunities. Players will also have the opportunity to upgrade all of these weapons and purchase new fighting moves.

SURELY IT SHOULD'VE BEEN A FINAL FANTASY-STYLE ADVENTURE GAME RATHER THAN A HACK 'N' SLASH AFFAIR? IS IT PURELY FIGHTING, OR IS THERE ADVENTURE AND STEALTH ACTION TOO?

Like the films, the game is focused on a third-person action-adventure experience. The game features dramatic camera views of the action within fully 3D interactive environments taken straight from the big screen. A visceral, tactical combat system will encourage players to be strategic with their selection of characters, weaponry and moves.



UP 'N' OVER Shapely terrain should up gameplay fun.



THE ARCHER For those of you who prefer distant combat.



THE AXE-MAN DIE-ETH A bad day to die. It's raining.

IS THE GAME BASED ON MISSION OBJECTIVES, OR DOES IT INVOLVE FREE ROAMING?

The player will need to progress through each of the levels, so it is mission-based.

HOW MANY CHARACTERS APPEAR ON SCREEN AT ONCE?

We've crafted a very advanced rendering engine for the PS2 which allows us to display dozens of characters on screen at once in some highly detailed environments. We're very proud of this technical feat, and we're confident that the quality of the game graphics demonstrates that achievement.

BOWS AND ARROWS AGAINST THE LIGHTNING

So far, so exactly what we'd expect to hear from a man in the throes of 'bigging up' his product. The images show a game that seems to consist of edited highlights of the films' most dramatic set-pieces. So with such an array of characters and stabbing implements to choose from, how do you go about creating a balanced game?

"We've created a fighting system that is accessible, but increasingly complex to keep the action fresh and the player wanting to defeat the orcs. You can only get so far by simply mashing buttons in this game," promises Evans, before going on to explain this in a typically developer way we don't really understand, but are leaving in for all you clever people out there:

"The fighting controls intersect with a complex AI system that we call the Battle Manager. This system creates and manages massive, raging

battles between orcs, elves, and the armies of men... and the player is right in the middle of the action"

The thing is, we never really care for these running-around-in-circles-hacking-things-up kind of games. You never know who you're attacking, you often get surrounded, and when you do feel in control, gameplay tends to degenerate to pressing the same buttons again and again. We want assurance that *Lord of the Rings* isn't going to be the same as all the rest; we want to know that skill is involved too; that it's not all just slings, arrows and outrageous misfortune. After all, there's nothing more tedious and frustrating than games where one wave of battling monsters with clueless button-bashing is followed by another. And another. And another... Hence this question:

HOW DOES THE FIGHTING WORK? IS THERE A TACTICAL SIDE TO THE BRAWLING, OR IS IT SIMPLE HACKING ALL THE WAY THROUGH?

During combat, the player has many different moves at his disposal, which range from basic combo attacks to complex killing move sequences. This allows the player to create some fantastically-varied attacks. The player also uses their bow, throwing knives or throwing axes to take out enemies at range... or even up-close if you're really skillful with the weapons.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE THREE CHARACTERS? SIMPLY BECAUSE THEY'RE THE FILM'S MAIN PROTAGONISTS?

Yes, they are the major action heroes in the movies! So naturally it makes sense to have them in the game.

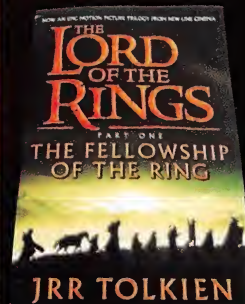
THE TRILOGY IN BRIEF

A CONCISE GUIDE TO THE THREE BOOKS.

BOOK 1 THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING

PLOT

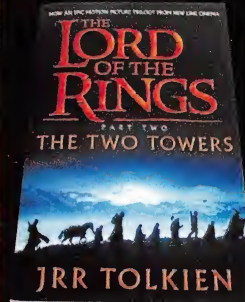
Evil thing wants magic ring. Small men hide ring. Wizard helps. Small men decide ring should be melted. Big journey starts. Fighting ensues.



BOOK 2 THE TWO TOWERS

PLOT

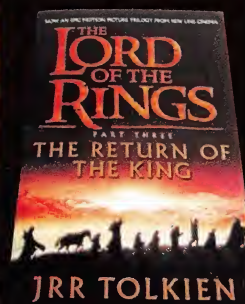
Small men go to bad place to destroy ring. Reformed evil thing helps cause. Separate group saves many more small men. Big battle ensues.



BOOK 3 RETURN OF THE KING

PLOT

Groups break up. People die. Hope is completely lost. Challenges faced. King leads undead army. City saved. Ring destroyed. Evil thing defeated.



DOWN WITH THIS SORT OF THING!

INTERNET PETITION TO CHANGE THE NAME OF THE TWO TOWERS GENERATES INTENTIONALLY AND UNINTENTIONALLY HILARIOUS RESPONSES.



Some joker started up a web petition to have *The Two Towers*' name changed, claiming the director had "decided to tastelessly name the sequel *The Two Towers*," adding "the title is clearly meant to refer to the attacks on the World Trade Center". The petition got a lot of responses – some serious, some not so. Here are our favourites...

"This has to be the single stupidest petition ever conceived. The moron who thought this up is an obviously illiterate ape who doesn't deserve to live, let alone get access to a computer."

"Change the title to 'Dude, Where's my Ring?'"

"I think we need to bulldoze that tower in Pisa too. The leaning tower is clearly a symbol that Italians hate the victims of September 11."

"What sort of morons sign this petition seriously?"

"The facts that movies were shot long before 9-11 and the books were written long before Elvis had a hit notwithstanding, any modifying of the title would result in free publicity for New Line, thus bringing more revenue for the film."

"Peter Jackson, have you no shame? You should be thrown into prison for trying to capitalize on the 9-11 attacks. Why can't you just name it 'LORD OF THE RINGS TWO'???"

"Hello, I am Osama bin Laden, and yes, I did help Peter Jackson with the movie. I even helped Tolkien write the book 50 years ago."

"I agree fully. This is a careless, heartless attempt at making more money by Peter Jackson. He knows naming his movie *The Two Towers* will cause controversy, and will in turn cause people to go see it. And he cannot change the title because he knows it will flop otherwise. The controversial name is his only chance to get people into the theatres. Please, New Line Cinema and Peter Jackson, do the right thing and change the title."

"It's the name of the book! It came out in 1954! Get a grip!"

"While we're at it, let's ban the words 'two', 'towers', and 'trade' from all spoken language. We don't want anybody to remotely be able to connect a stray thought to the Trade Towers."

"Personally, the movie titled 'The Muppets Take Manhattan' causes me much more concern. The title alone implies the Muppets had something to do with the 9-11 attacks. I fear this will lead to a racial stereotyping by law enforcement personnel against the Muppet population in the US."

"Yeah, and I'm annoyed by the title of book three also, let's call it 'The Return of the Democratically Elected Head of Government.'"

"I agree. And all those idiots who said the book was written before, that doesn't mean they're not cashing in. It is blatantly named after the Twin Towers. Idiots."

"OK, OK. You all convinced me. I am renaming the movie 'Anthrax Mailbag and the Shoe-Bomb Terrorists'. I hope this satisfies everyone" [posted by someone purporting to be Peter Jackson]



LAKESIDE CENTRE I see imminently dead people.



A HEAD FOR A HEAD Justice, Middle-Earth style (ie, death).



BRINGING THE HOUSE DOWN The similarity to the film is impressive.

ARE THE DIFFERENT CHARACTERS AVAILABLE TO THE PLAYER JUST THERE TO SHOW, OR WILL YOUR CHOSEN ROLE AFFECT THE GAMEPLAY?

Yes, the gameplay experience will be different based on which character you choose, given their unique characteristics and differing upgrade paths.

WHAT CONCLUSION CAN THERE BE TO THE GAME? DOES IT GO BEYOND THE TWO TOWERS?

Well now, we can't give away all the secrets can we?

WHAT ENEMIES DO YOU MEET?

Players will battle most of the enemies and monsters found in the first two movies, including the Ringwraiths, Mordor orcs, Mordor orcs, Saruman's Uruk-Hai, the Cave Troll from Balin's Tomb, and as yet unseen baddies from the upcoming film, to name a few.

WHAT PART OF THE GAME ARE YOU MOST PLEASED ABOUT?

The actual production of the game is realised through a close, collaborative relationship with New Line Cinema and Peter Jackson's production units in New Zealand. This exclusive relationship provides us access to every detail about the film series imaginable – therefore enabling us to achieve a close visual correlation to Middle Earth. We want people to play our game and say to themselves, "Wow! Is that scene from the game or the movie?!" So far, we are very pleased with our progress and feel players will have exactly that reaction when they experience the game.



CHING-CHING! Swooshy sword effects? You bet!



HOBBITAT An artist's impression of... a house?



LORD OF THE RINGS 2003: ROAD TO THE MOUNTAIN

There's nothing Electronic Arts likes more than a recurring annual franchise. If a thing's worth doing, it's worth doing properly and on a yearly basis. On this possibly touchy subject, Evans brings expected news, saying: "Electronic Arts has a multi-year agreement with New Line to develop/release a series of games using its movie license. The plan is to release a total of three games, as of now, based on the *LotR* movie rights: this year's *The Two Towers*, next Christmas's *The Return of the King*, and the following Christmas's *Trilogy Project* [currently only operating under a working title]."

HOW WILL THE GAMES FIT TOGETHER? WILL THEY REPRESENT DIFFERENT PLAYING STYLES (SAY, AN ACTION GAME, AN ADVENTURE GAME, A PLATFORM GAME [JOKE]), OR WILL THEY RUN AS ONE SEAMLESS STORY?

We've only announced that we'll be coming out with new games in late '03 (based on the third movie, *The Return of the King*) and '04 (a trilogy-type game, no title yet). You can bet that we'll have more details to announce later on!

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THIS STYLE OF GAME IN THE FIRST PLACE?

Our goal is to recreate the intense action moments from the first two films, so a third-person action-adventure felt the most appropriate way to deliver fun gameplay, while recreating the stunning visuals of the films in the interactive media. Our game design allows the player to take the roles of the heroes of the Fellowship, and play through all of the key moments that determined the fate of the ring as depicted in the films.

ARE THE LEVELS PARTICULARLY BIG OR UNUSUAL? IS MUCH OF IT BASED OUTDOORS?

Our levels encompass many of the areas from the films, including both interiors and exteriors of differing sizes, atmospheres, and design. Expect to feel as if you're in the movie environments both visually and audibly while playing the game.

DID YOU HAVE MUCH ACCESS TO FILM MATERIALS AND ARTWORK FOR DESIGN PURPOSES?

As mentioned earlier, we're extremely blessed to have such great partners with New Line Cinema and Peter Jackson's production units in New Zealand. It truly has been a collaboration with all sides. This exclusive relationship provides us access to every detail imaginable... therefore enabling us to achieve a close visual correlation to the filmmaker's vision of Middle-Earth. This includes sketch art, drawings and stills of film footage.

WHAT POWERS DO THE CHARACTERS HAVE? DO THEY HAVE A RANGE OF DIFFERENT ABILITIES?

You'll be able to play the roles of Aragorn, Legolas and Gimli as they appeared in the films. This means executing many of the same exciting and daring moves as seen in the movies. Each of the three has a different style of combat, and that's implemented in the game as well, offering a variety of gameplay to the player. In addition, we'll also have a voiceover from the actors to further ensure their characters are as close to their movie likeness as possible.

/ WE WANT PEOPLE TO SAY "WOW! IS THAT SCENE FROM THE GAME OR THE MOVIE?" /

THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE TWO TOWERS

ORCING HELL You (centre), enemies (everywhere).



OOH! SAVE ME! Archers – too scared to wade in. Chickens.



HEALTH UP Always check behind waterfalls for hidden items? Yep, us too. It's a game thing.



EDGE SUCKS "Wooo! I'm falling! Not really..." *stab*.



DO YOU PLAY AS A PARTY OR SINGULARLY? AND DOES YOUR CHOICE OF CHARACTER AFFECT WHO ELSE IS IN THE GAME?

You'll be able to play as any of the three key heroes of the Fellowship, and will choose who you'll play at the beginning of each level. The other members of the Fellowship will play alongside you as is appropriate for that portion of the movie's development. So if you chose to play as Aragorn, you can expect to see Legolas and Gimli, and perhaps Gandalf and Frodo depending on where you are, fighting at your side as computer controlled allies.

DO YOU CHOOSE WHO TO PLAY AS OR WILL YOU BE FORCED TO SWITCH BETWEEN CHARACTERS DURING THE GAME?

Players select which character they wish to bring into battle at the start of every level.

IS THERE MAGIC INVOLVED? IF SO, HOW COMPLEX IS THE SYSTEM?

The game is melee oriented, however, there is always Gandalf...

WILL YOU HAVE ACCESS TO THE VARIOUS ARTEFACTS FROM THE ORIGINAL STORY?

Yes, in the form of character upgrades that can be purchased as you progress through the game.

TODAY'S HEADLINES IN BRIEF

What have we learned so far? Three characters with different abilities, upgradeable weapons, lots of enemies, occasional magic, lots of fighting

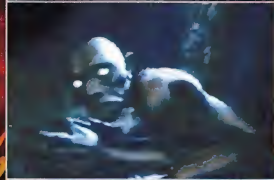
SAD TALE This is what happens to you if you stay in reading LotR all day.

LAND OF CONFUSION

OR BUY THIS ONE INSTEAD.

THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING by Vivendi Universal is something else entirely. Or, at least, it's something else that's slightly different. Information on it is vague – we're told to expect a game based solely on the first book/film, with the player controlling Frodo through a typically epic action-adventure experience.

Your eight missions take you on a mystical and now familiar journey from The Shire to the River Anduin, via famous *Hobbit* locations such as Rivendell, The Old Forest, Weathertop and the Mines of Moria. Here are some small shots from the game's Intro sequence which may or may not give you an idea of what to expect. Probably not, though.



A BRIDGE TOO FAR Don't hurt him, he's only small.

GROUND FORCE "Charlie, this fountain's way too big."



GARDEN ARMY Never mind him, you trim that hedge.



and a storyline – hardly breaking new ground, but if you mess with the formula too much with a property of the magnitude of *Lord of the Rings*, you get lynched. There's a devoted bunch of fans out there, who want to see their favourite story retold in style, doing justice to the famed characters in the process. So how will the game present itself, we ask, in a slightly drawn-out fashion:

HOW DOES THE PLAYER INTERACT WITH OTHER CHARACTERS IN THE STORY? IS IT BY CUT-SCENE, OR GOING UP TO A PERSON AND 'USING' THEM? WILL THEY BE AT PRESET POINTS TO GIVE SPECIFIC INFORMATION OR AT REVISITABLE POINTS FOR MORE GENERAL ADVICE?

The storyline is progressed through a combination of movie footage and in-game cinematic sequences. The gameplay is action-oriented, so there will not be player-controlled dialog. However, where appropriate, cut-scenes are intermixed with the action to give the player key bits of information or to move the story along.

WILL YOU BE ABLE TO EXPLORE MIDDLE EARTH AT YOUR OWN WILL AND PACE, OR ARE YOU TAKEN DOWN A STRICTLY SET PATH?

Because we're following the path of the films, the game is mission-based using the story arc from the movies. However, depending on the level there is some exploration.

HOW MUCH EASIER IS IT TO MAKE A GAME WHEN YOU'VE ALREADY GOT THE STORY AND CHARACTERS LAID OUT FOR YOU? HOW MUCH CREATIVE INPUT CAN YOU HAVE?

It's an incredible head start. Straight away we are able to focus our energies on creating compelling gameplay and fantastic content, rather than having to develop characters.

WHAT IS AN ORC?

An engineer that has been coding for 36 hours without a shower or a shave :-)

And so, with that terrifying insight into the Electronic Arts work ethic and the pervasive use of those horrid 'smileys' in our society, our job here is nearly done. We realise now that we forgot to ask him anything about the sound, which, as legend passed on through generations dictates, is 'often the most overlooked part of game design'. Thanks to its 'special friendship' that seems certain to blossom into true love, EA is able to borrow, steal, sample and modify any element of the film's sound and effects, and the Howard Shore-composed soundtrack is there for them to nab at will. Whether it's allowed to rip it all to mp3 format and dump it on the Internet is unknown, but rest assured it should sound... well, nice.

If the combat system is as good as it says, it should play nice too, with what we've seen showing a game that looks like a decent update to the three-dimensional slashers we've been playing for years. With three beloved characters, orcs, magic, 16 missions, plus the most famous fantasy storyline behind it, surely this effort to unite the gamers of Outer-Earth can only succeed.

/ PSW

"WHAT BIG EYES YOU'VE GOT CAPTAIN"



ETA
SEPTEMBER
2002

BEAST BBQ You've got to flame them to finish 'em off.

THE THING

SURELY IT CAN'T LIVE UP TO THE CLASS OF THE FILM? DO YOU WANNA BET?

TYPE ACTION ADVENTURE

DISTRIBUTOR VIVENDI

GAME GLANCE

/ Follows on shortly after the events of the 1982 film
/ Puzzles can be solved in a variety of ways
/ Up to three investigators can accompany you
/ Team mates experience fear

SUSPICION IS THE DEFINING

emotion in John Carpenter's classic film *The Thing*. Yes, it can be terrifying and grotesque at times but it's the doubt and mistrust that ultimately tears the group apart and leads to its demise. When you can't trust anyone but yourself, how are you going to fend off a rapidly multiplying, image copying, remorseless killing machine? That's the dilemma that faces players in this *Resident Evil*-esque chiller from Brit developer Computer Artworks that gives the Japanese a lesson in survival horror.

Unlike the seminal *Resi* games you're not on your own for the majority of *The Thing* and yet for

most of it you feel lonelier than you ever did in *Raccoon City*. With the fear that the man right next to you could be a mysterious, deadly entity in disguise, gnawing away at everybody, no one is willing to place their trust in anything but the gun clasped tightly in their trembling fingers.

Cleverly the game registers fear and mistrust, with each computer controlled character reacting to your actions and their surroundings. Discover someone hiding within the mangled wreckage of an Antarctic Research Centre, whose destruction you've been tasked with investigating, and their initial reaction will be one of scepticism. This is signified by an icon above their head that indicates

their present state. A gesture from you, such as offering them a spare gun might win them over, but they'll continue to monitor your every action.

At any one time you can have up to three other team members following you as you infiltrate the base. A menu indicating each team member's state can be viewed at any time. The more you act like a trustworthy leader, the more they'll help and support you. But do anything suspicious and they can still turn on you at any time.

THE WOTSISNAME, ERM...

These fellow soldiers are even affected by the fear they're all struggling to deal with. Dark, claustrophobic areas, grotesque sights, like the grisly, fleshy remains of deceased inhabitants, or even just strange sounds can send your squad members into a hysterical fit. Only by keeping an eye on their rising terror and dealing with them by injecting them with a hypo spray or getting the hell out of any spooky areas can you keep your team intact. And you're going to need them.

Certain members have particular attributes that are essential to your progress. Power generators need fixing, door locks bypassed and medical attention dished out on numerous occasions and it's only by maintaining their confidence in you

FSW PROPHECY

BEST BECAUSE

▲ Injects the survival horror game with much-needed imagination to offer a chilling experience.

WORST BECAUSE

▼ Why hasn't the developer included John Carpenter's eerie soundtrack to accompany the gameplay?



LOBSTER HANDS He used to be one of your buddies.



AS COLD AS ICE Let the blue bar empty and you'll die of exposure.

TRANSFORMERS. KILLERS IN DISGUISE

TRUST NO ONE BECAUSE THEY COULD BE ABOUT TO LOSE THEIR HEAD... AND ARMS... AND FEET...



HEAD FOR THE SNOW Don't get too close to the bonfire or you'll fry.

that they'll obey your commands. You can force them to do things at gunpoint but don't be surprised to find them jabbing a flamethrower into your back at the next opportunity.

Unlike the other squad game featured this month (*Conflict: Desert Storm*) you're only ever in control of one character and your influence over other team members is kept very simple. Via a intuitive drop-down menu you can make them follow you or stand guard, swap items, or perform in their particular area of expertise. It's all kept incredibly straightforward and yet infuses the game with a great deal more depth than any other survival horror style game.

YOU KNOW, THE WOTJAMACALLIT...

The Thing is riddled with puzzles that are all imaginatively logical and usually utilise a number of team members. And where the puzzles are satisfying, the action is frantic. A helpful lock-on aids your targeting and other team members will



automatically defend the group if they're armed. The problem is that attacks usually occur when you least expect them.

Thanks to the impressive blizzard effects, the eerily uninhabited bases, the long stretches of fruitless searching through abandoned labs and wanderings over desolate snow drifts, tension builds with every footstep. The fear of hypothermia, (a meter signifies just how long you can stay out in freezing temperatures before you start to suffer) the tense wait for the next inevitable monstrous encounter, the constant worry that there's an impostor in your midst, all help to make the stress and apprehension almost unbearable.



DISGUSTING Don't get too close or he'll gob all over you.

And even when the brown stuff hits the fan, the game maintains the tension by avoiding any *Final Fantasy* style CG instead utilising the in-game graphics to further the action. One memorable scene sees a mistrusting investigator wanting your squad to take a blood test to prove your humanity. Out of the blue, one of them has a fit and starts to transform before your eyes. In a split-second all hell breaks loose leaving you frantically trying to save your skin and work out who's good and who's freakish while trying not to shoot everything that moves. It's frenzied stuff that captures the panic and terror of the film impressively.

/ MIKEY FOLEY

FIRST OPINIONS

PSW

The Thing takes the standard survival horror genre and rams a size ten boot right up the crack marked 'Innovation'. The trust and fear factor is a revolutionary addition that makes the whole playing experience infinitely more involved. While the eerie setting, conveyed with impressive graphical flair, is equally as foreboding and terror inducing as any haunted house. Having finally played this game we can safely say that we're rather excited.

"PICK A CAR, ANY CAR. ONLY JOKING"

POSITION

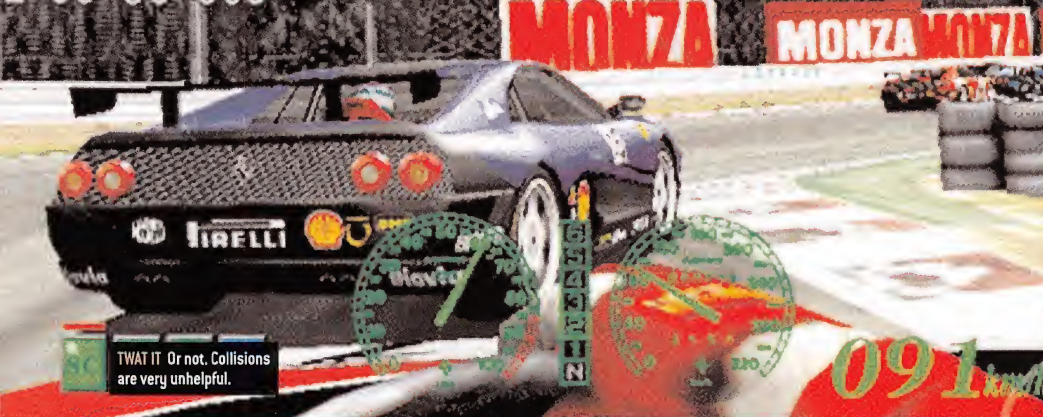
7/8

LAP 2/2

TOTAL 02' 47"242

1 02' 10"921

2 00' 36"303



ETA
SEPTEMBER
2002



FUGLY Would you really want it in anything but red?



CAN I GO NOW? This brief fly-by is all you'll see of your car.



DON'T DREAM IT'S OVAL. Simple track, but races are still tough.

FERRARI F355 CHALLENGE

SEGA CONTINUES TO PUT ITS PRODUCTS IN THE HANDS OF SONY, AND HERE'S THE LATEST – YU SUZUKI'S INFAMOUS F355 SIMULATOR.

TYPE	DRIVING
DISTRIBUTOR	SONY
GAME GLANCE	
/ Nine tracks	
/ One car	
/ More nails than nails	

FERRARI IS PRECIOUS ABOUT ITS image. It's very controlling of how its products are portrayed, and seems to dislike its cars being compared directly to their competition. Perhaps it's worried we might make our own decisions? However, it doesn't always make the most informed choices – its total PR control fails when the PRs themselves don't know what they're talking about. This happens quite a lot to PRs. Hence you see Ferraris appearing in the smeary and totally bad *Driving*

Emotion but not in the genius *Gran Turismo*. Hence you see its F1 drivers fixing the result on the last corner of a Grand Prix, and looking surprised when the crowd – sports fans, not business fans – jeer and seethe. Hence you see intriguing products like the F360 Modena-only racer from Brit developer Brain In A Jar being cancelled, reportedly due to licensing and cost difficulties.

Ferrari F355 Challenge aims to make amends for some of this stupidity, by giving us an ultra-detailed simulation of one of the finest cars ever –

um, the F355. No, you can't test yourself against its class competitors and there are no new cars to unlock, but *Challenge* was never intended to be that kind of game. There's a Championship mode and a few stand-alone driving challenges such as in 'gentlemanly driving', but completing the game is never going to be the real test here. Completing a lap is the real test.

SCARLET OH-HARDER

This game redefines hard. Everything is focused on getting you into that edge-of-no-control zone with the car, so the menus are uncomplicated, you're restricted to in-car view only (thankfully more realistic than normal, in that the dashboard and pillars appear in your vision only peripherally) and it's easy to turn the in-game music off. Seriously, it's an affront – screaming fake cock-rock of the worst order. So there you are, music off, sitting on the grid staring at the driving aids – traction control, stability control and ABS – that you've just switched off. You're good. You don't need them.

Er... yes you do. When we say this game redefines hard, we mean it. Even with them on,

PSW PROPHECY

BEST BECAUSE

- ▲ 355s are iconic cars
- ▲ It's a massive challenge
- ▲ Not even *Gran Turismo 3* has such detailed tuning

WORST BECAUSE

- ▼ It's an old game now
- ▼ Too exacting to be fun?
- ▼ Can you be bothered with such fine-tuning of a car?



IT'S JUST TOO HARD FOR ME Under the helmet is a red face.



NOT A COMPETITION TIME A free game if you can name this car.

F355? OH GOD, THAT'S SO 1999

THEY DON'T EVEN MAKE THE F355 ANYMORE – AND THE F360 THAT REPLACED IT ISN'T EXACTLY ITS NEWEST CAR EITHER...



THIS IS THE BRAND NEW FERRARI FX. Or F60. Or F140... nobody's really sure, as the car's still in development and official clarification isn't due until the Paris Motor Show at the end of this month. We think it's unlikely to be called the F60, though, as the appearance of the F40 and F50 – on which this conjecture is based – coincided with the relevant Ferrari anniversaries. Its 60th isn't until 2007.

Whatever, this is the latest attempt in the company's long, noble struggle to bring F1 technology to the colossally rich. And frankly it can piss off. It's slower than the ancient McLaren F1, would you believe, and can only manage 205mph! What good is that? However, the 6-litre, 650bhp mid-mounted V12 can shove it to 60mph in 3.2 seconds and 100mph in six, so at least it's slightly quicker away from the traffic lights outside Broadway shops.

HUH. LOOKS LIKE A NOSE.

Animal lovers! At speed tardy wildlife need no longer worry about being decapitated by a massive rear wing, as this new supercar hasn't got one. Instead possums and pigeons will be dragged through the downforce-producing underbody venturis and fired out the back to disintegrate at supersonic speeds. A seven speed gearbox, paddle shifting, 4WD (a Ferrari first) and the exclusivity provided by a 400 car production run adds the final reasons to ignore that monstrous styling and buy one. Pininfarina had a hand in it, but the windtunnel won – it's striking, but it's hardly beautiful, is it? And it's yours for over \$1million. Start saving. Makes \$300,000 for a second-hand F40 seem a bargain.



FER-ARSE Sadly, only an in-car view is available during races.



THAT'S GONNA COST YA MATE Damn, seems I need an exhaust too.



HIGH CONCEPT You go along the grey bit in this red thing. Avoid the green areas. Cool.

you're unlikely to do anything other than slide helplessly into the gravel at the first tight corner you see. And even on the easiest of the three difficulty levels, you're going to need immaculate knowledge of the track: braking points, apexes and gear selection are critical. And it's not even good enough just to work out safe values for these, drive around and finish the race. You'll need to maximise every part of every corner, and that includes braking, mid corner speed and your throttle control on the exit. Sliding tyres at best mean lost time, and at worst mean hello gravel trap.

THE TRACKS OF MY TEARS

You can enjoy faithfully recreated gravel traps from Laguna Seca, the Nurburgring, the Atlanta and Motegi ovals, Monza, Sugo and Suzuka. This last comes in both long and short versions. There's also Ferrari's own private test track, Fiorano, although sadly no races take place on it. It's strictly for testing, after all. And if you want to spend lap after lap assessing minute changes to your set-up, you can, as there's a suitably hardcore selection of tweakables. Ride height, spring rate, stabiliser

stiffness, camber, toe angle, limited slip diff lock rate and rear wing angle can all be adjusted, assuming you've got the heart to bother. It may just yield those vital few seconds you need, however, so at least it's there should you want to delve into this arcane side of driving.

You may well recognise this game already, of course. It originally appeared in the early Triassic with an impressive three-screen arcade layout, and went from there to Dreamcast shortly before it became extinct. It's getting on. Nothing major has changed, either, and sadly there's no iLink option, meaning the three-screen set up can't be aped. OK, it'd take a person of unusual dedication to get this organised, but on certain courses the game can suffer from the lack of peripheral vision – the turn-in point for some corners only comes when the corner itself is out of view. It would have been nice if the ability to negate this problem with a couple of extra TVs was at least an option.

So anyway, it's quite hard. Where does it lie in the scheme of things? On a scale of one to ten, with *Burnout* at three for difficulty, *Gran Turismo* getting tougher at seven and *Formula One 2001* at

nine, *Ferrari F355 Challenge* has taken you down and is kicking you repeatedly in the face, screaming about numbers being the work of the devil. It's quite exacting. Look, believe it or not, this reporter has actually driven an F355 around a racetrack – the superfast, 60s Goodwood circuit – and can honestly say it was easier than this. Those cars are practically idiot proof. Luckily. Still, anyone wanting what is almost certainly the second hardest driving game ever devised (with *Grand Prix Legends* on PC just taking the top spot) should start salivating right now. And what better car could the game for driving aficionados feature than the one all car lovers dream of, the F355?

/ STEVEN WILLIAMS

FIRST OPINIONS

PSW

On the one hand, this is a superbly tough, exhaustively detailed simulation of one of the world's best cars. On the other, it's a port of a quite ancient arcade game, by way of an earlier Dreamcast port. Can it still excite? Has it been surpassed? We shall see.

"I'LL JUST IMMERSE MYSELF IN THIS SANDPIT THEN"

ETA
NOVEMBER
2002



BEEEMER BUM Car models are great – this BMW probably 'rocks'.



NIGHT OF THE LONG DRIVES Sunshine is for girls. Girls! Sigh.



CITIES IN DUSK Even the street circuit runs smoothly. Tempting.

TOTAL IMMERSION RACING

WORLD SPORTS CAR RACING GETS THE PS2 TREATMENT.

TYPE	RACING
DISTRIBUTOR	VIVENDI

GAME GLANCE
/ Tough, career-based racing
/ Start with a lowly ranked team and work upwards
/ Le Mans prototype cars
/ All the usual tracks

SEE IT ON DVD
/ Cars
/ Tracks
/ Races
/ Do you really not know?

PSW PROPHECY

BEST BECAUSE

- ▲ Oh look, it won't be the best racer out there...
- ▲ ...but there are some great cars and tracks

WORST BECAUSE

- ▼ Badly overshadowed by *TOCA Race Driver*
- ▼ Maybe a little too hard for casual drivers

THIS RACER APPEARS AT AN

unfortunate time, emerging into a post-V8 Supercars Race Driver world. Compared to that massive,

accomplished title, you might think it had little hope – but we have an inkling that won't be the case. Make no mistake, it won't invade V8's real estate, but *Total Immersion Racing* could well carve a space of its own on the shelves alongside.

It too is career based, but without the three-dimensional drama – or visual splendour – of V8. While of course you can just choose a quick race, the main mode sees you working through the teams to the best cars in the highest class – the prototypes – as you might have seen racing at Le Mans. Initially you're faced with offers from a few lowly teams, and you must prevail in a five-round series in order to attract better offers. Your team's input isn't merely restricted to the menu screens, either, as you'll find a constant barrage of information flowing from your pit radio.

Some of it's useful and positive, such as who's in front and what lap you're on, but your guys are obviously not *that* easily impressed. Get passed, slide into a gravel trap or spin off and you're likely to get an earful of grief. At the moment the haranguing is too much and you soon want to throttle the guy, but we fully expect him to back off

by the time it comes to review. Nobody wants to be told it's the last lap 12 times in a row.

All classes run at the same time, so winning your race doesn't necessarily mean you must pass the entire field – not unless you're in the highest division yourself, of course. This means there are far more racers on the track, and leaves you with the added challenge of passing a far superior car should you feel like it. You're only likely to manage it if one of them spins, true – the AI drivers are pleasingly human with respect to mistakes, and entertainingly aggressive at the same time – but at least the possibility is there. The neat little track map (not shown in these replay screens) represents all cars outside your class as black dots

rather than red, so between that, the position indicator and your currently over-zealous team boss, you should always be able to pace yourself.

STAY ON TARGET

And pace yourself you must. While the handling is reasonably simple, you definitely need to know the braking points (look for darker areas of rubber) and apexes of each track to get the best from it. Corner speeds aren't as critical as in the painfully knife-edged *Ferrari F355 Challenge*, thank God, and there's more room for jazz with the car if you screw up, but go in a gear too high and you're visiting the gravel trap. They slow you down massively: there are no short cuts here. You've got to do it properly.



REAL UGLY Pretty graphics doing an ugly track. Yesterday.



RACE WITHIN A RACE You share a track with much faster cars.



MONZA MASH Has this track been in every driving game now?



SURPRISE See if you can spot the car in this pic. Hint: there it is.



SWOOPALICIOUS It's an Avis, look. It's a rentacar. You can rent one of these. We think that's right.



HOLE IN THE WALL Drive through hills! Like magic!



KICK OUT THE JAMS Traffic on the M2 was diabolical.

The pleasing weight of the cars and the rich, well-balanced handling means you can enjoy a couple of laps just reeling in the car ahead. You don't have to go banzai in full arcade style, and you don't just have to plod along waiting until it stops like in *GT3*. And when you do catch them, passing is fun. They won't just sit there on the line, dumbly, like so many others, and if you run wide they'll pass you back. They're not afraid to rub panels, either. In fact, so determined were they in this preview version that we can only hope the difficulty level isn't yet set. Officially there's Amateur, Professional and Legend settings, but even on Amateur they're insanely good. We just hope they're all on Legend at the moment by default... either that or we'll have to give our driving licenses back.

OOH, SHINY CARS

There's some delectable machinery here. The most recognisable cars are probably the full Le Mans-style prototypes, such as the racing green Bentley Speed Eight, the BMW V12 LMR, the Audi R8 – one



THERE'S A BENTLEY Driven by a bent man called Lee. True story.

of the all-time greats – and a modern road classic, the insanely advanced McLaren F1. Then there's Don Panoz's distinctive front-engined concoctions in both GT1 and Spider forms, which only serve to ram home even further how much more exciting this class is than Formula 1, both in terms of spectacle and visible technology. Fortunately, only two of the tracks here are used in F1 as well, so even though there aren't that many they're not all dull: Monza, Rockingham, Hockenheim, Sebring, Talheimring, Springfield, Minato City and Silverstone are your locations, and they're great versions. It's all rather pretty.

Of course, there are plenty more cars besides the obvious ones, including the rarified Quaife GT1, Sintura GTS, Dome S101 and Noble M12 GTD. The lowlier but still sexy M3 GTR, standard Audi TT and Rockingham Champ Car add a little spice to it all and there are still more, but we'll leave the experts to spot them in the shots. We're certainly hoping all these appear in the final version: we couldn't bring you our own screens due to licensing issues. And don't let the rather disappointing quality of these images put you off – it looks far better in motion. Take a look at the DVD to see for yourself.

/ STEVEN WILLIAMS

FIRST OPINIONS

PSW

The game at preview stage is absolutely nails, but in a good way – our only complaint is that the analogue buttons need far too much pressure. The cars look great, the tracks are entertaining, the speed is there and the racing's fun. The connoisseur's choice?

BAD TIMING

LITTLE TOTAL IMMERSION RACING GOES UP AGAINST THE MIGHT OF V8 RACE DRIVER. OH DEAR.

//WE CAN'T HELP WORRYING THAT, DESPITE ITS merits, this game is going to be overshadowed somewhat. Can it drag itself out to an unlikely, Rocky-esque victory? Can it take the world by storm regardless? Probably not. But let's ask an expert. What does Andy Yorke – brother of Thom, lead singer of ultra-successful Radiohead – think? Andy's band Unbelievable Truth recently gave up completely, by the way, so go easy on him.



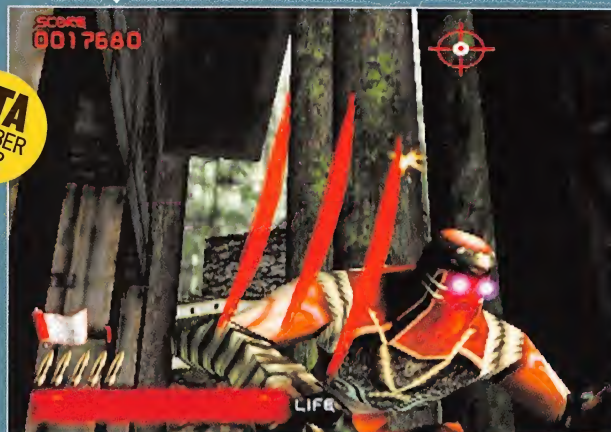
"THIS IS A CITIZEN'S ARREST! OI, COME BACK!"



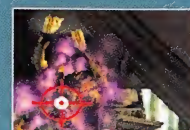
FUGLY He was never picked for the best footy team. His clothes were all second-hand. He's angry.



NAIL CARE Both ninjas later died of injuries sustained while trying to urinate.



SCRATCH YOUR EYES OUT Shoot first, ask questions later. "Would you like to go for a drink with me?"



MORE BULLETS! Quick! Quick!



ONE EYED WARRIOR She has no idea how far away we are.



ARACHNOPHOBIC We found one of these in the bath once. Really.

NINJA ASSAULT

MORE LIGHTGUN ARCADE ACTION COMES TO US IN THE FORM OF NINJA ASSAULT. WHATEVER HAPPENED TO STEALTH?

TYPE	SHOOTER
DISTRIBUTOR	SONY
GAME GLANCE	
/ Nine levels	
/ Mini-games	
/ Loads of two-player action	
SEE IT ON DVD	
/ It's ninjas, but with guns!	
/ No ancient training needed	
/ Gun-ho shinobi action	
/ Multiplayer jujitsu blasting	

NINJAS CONTINUE TO ENTHRALL

gamesland, although there's no quiet dripping of poison down a thread into the sleeping mouth of your enemies here. This is far less subtle – you've got big guns. You might have seen Guren and Gunjo – ninja bodyguards to a princess – before, as Namco's shooter has long been playable in the arcades. The conversion has been remixed and augmented, interestingly, rather than simply pointed in the direction of the PS2 and left to stand there on its own, naked, out of place and lost.

So as well as being able to choose either of the original bodyguards, there's a new female character, Aoi. Each one has their own stats for constitution, attack power, ammo capacity, rapid-fire ability and health, so it could affect your chances. Aoi also has her own story arc, leading to a different ending (kills the baddies, turns to princess with a single kiss, moves into the palace and sets about manipulating the constitution towards an elected dictatorship through backstabbing, Machiavellian slurs and the withholding of sexual favours? No. Sadly, no).

Story mode sees you fighting through a re-jigged version of the original, with added characters, cut-scenes and even multiple endings. Naturally there are a variety of weapons to locate as you progress, but completing certain tasks in Jujitsu mode unlocks extra guns for this main body of the game. Also, finishing the game in Story mode unlocks further Jujitsu challenges... does this game just expand forever, mode against mode? No? Just checking. And Jujitsu is essentially a series of mini-games, such as fighting without hitting certain objects in the environment.

There are some hidden levels among the nine officially numbered stages, which include a castle, a forest, a ghost town, caves, and Shogun Kigai's HQ. Shogun Kigai has kidnapped the princess, Koto, which is why you're an avenging ninja bodyguard with a gun. Just in case you hadn't guessed.

The third mode is Arcade, which is actually a Xerox of the original game, a straight port. Beneath it all can expect the usual gun game ingredients, so your movements are in the hands of the programmers as you're pulled along on rails, firing desperately at whatever pops up, pausing only to

wonder how much more annoying somebody shouting 'reload!' every five seconds can get. You also fight in regular boss battles against some maniacal enemies, such as giant robot spiders and killer whales' hearts walking on their own, bleeding vena cava and trying to crush you. Actually, we made that second one up.

Those of you with lightguns and friends will be pleased to see that both Story and Arcade mode support co-operative play, while Jujitsu mode can be fought head-to-head. Whether you'll want to bother or not will become clear soon, when we bring you the full review. Don't worry, it won't be long – these are ninjas. It'll just creep up on you.

/ STEVEN WILLIAMS

FIRST OPINIONS

PSW

It might be an 'on-rails' shooter, but it still feels sprightly. And we've seen the alternative: *Resident Evil Gun Survivor 2*, anyone? The attention Namco's paid to adding new features is also heartening – perhaps this will be the first gun game to last more than five minutes?

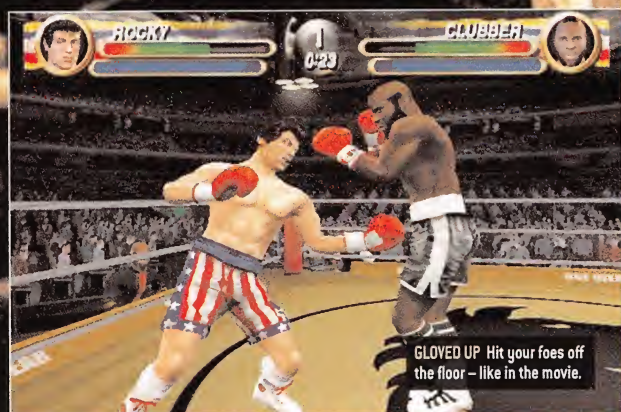


(LEFT) Apollo in the days before a Predator blew his arm off.



ETA
NOVEMBER
2002

GENIUS "If I change, and you change, maybe we can all change..."



GLOVED UP Hit your foes off the floor – like in the movie.

"ALL YOU NEED IS GLOVE..."



BIG BABY Rocky's shorts double as a nappy when caught short.



TRAINING DAY Lose the burger-waist in the gym pre-bout.

ROCKY

ALL WE WANT TO KNOW IS...
SINCE WHEN HAS ADRIAN BEEN A GIRL'S NAME?

THE GREATEST CONTRIBUTION THE

Rocky series has made to the world of boxing is undoubtedly the removal of man-on-man hugging. While real-life bouts are diseased by repetitive breathless embracing, the movies opt instead to just chuck out sledgehammer lip-splitters and eye-puffing pile drivers. Of course PSW recognises the very real and respectful need for a couple of fellas to have a cuddle now and again – it's just not terribly exciting. No, for boxing to work in the cinema it needs a touch of the OTT about it.

And the same goes for games. EA's po-faced *Knockout Kings* series, while technically accurate, is uniformly dull, while Acclaim's daffy *Ready 2 Rumble 2* remains the PS2's most entertaining slugger, even after well over a year on release. The good news is that *Rocky* is looking like a contender (a phrase one is contractually obliged to trot out in any boxing game piece). Pleasingly it's going to be arcadey, immediate and rammed with implausible savagery. Indeed filmmakers MGM were adamant that the level of violence in the pictures be emulated, thus *Rocky* the game is likely to garner an M certificate. Plonked into the Balboa 'universe',

players take the monosyllabic one from grass roots pummelling at Mission Hall (seen during the first scenes in *Rocky*) through numerous original bouts, encountering iconic bosses along the way. These memorable fist-smiths comprise, as you might expect, enemy turned chumster Apollo Creed, gobby ex-A-Teamer Clubber Lang, steroid swigging robo-bod Ivan Drago and the one no one remembers from part five, Tommy Gunn.

22 x (16 + 2) = MY HEAD HURTS

With 22 boxers, each with 16 combo moves and two 'super punches', the game may also belie its pick-up-and-play demeanour by proffering some serious depth, particularly as no single fight tactic can be applied to all the opponents, demanding of the player recourse to a vast selection of moves and stratagems. One will also be able to tune the 'Italian Stallion' pre-bout via a series of training regimes – including sit-ups, endless bag hitting and girly skipping.

It's interesting to note the level of detail employed in the game too. While the animations have been acquired through the use of motion-capturing real boxers (as many games tend to do)

five different Rockys have been designed to accurately represent his appearance in the movies (see them standing lovely and proud atop this very textual-burst). This has taken into account muscle tone, body mass and hairstyles (there are some top 80s dos going on) as well as costume changes.

While the career mode forms the backbone of the title there's also a Knockout mode and an Exhibition mode. It's within the latter that you'll be able to take part in two-player bouts and use characters you've unlocked in the main game. Drago Vs Lang anyone? Add to this cinematics from the movies, voice acting from Stallone and Mr T and numerous fight locations, and *Rocky* is looking to be anything but.

/STEPHEN PIERCE

FIRST OPINIONS

PSW

We like the staggering boxers as they take a drubbing. We like the ease with which one can get into the action and feel competent. We like beating Drago in the face and neck for what he did to poor Apollo. We like the feel of being in the movies. We just like really...

TYPE	BOXING
DISTRIBUTOR	VIVENDI
GAME GLANCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> / Game glance / 22 pugilists / 16 combo moves / Movie scenes / Curious manish-wife

"SERIOUSLY THOUGH, I SAVE A FORTUNE ON TROUSERS"

ETA
FEBRUARY
2003



PRANCING MONG His game's better looking than he is...



IT'S A WHEEZE Enemies are slightly sinister. Like life itself.

RAYMAN 3 HOODLUM HAVOC

BACK TO KICK ASS, KNOWING THEY CAN'T KICK HIS – HE DOESN'T HAVE ONE...

TYPE ACTION ADVENTURE
DISTRIBUTOR UBI SOFT

GAME GLANCE
/ 10 worlds
/ 44 levels
/ Five new moves

SEE IT ON DVD
/ Jumping around
/ Shooting things
/ Running up and down
/ Being French

RAYMAN HAS NO ARMS, LEGS OR

neck and is incredibly popular with children. The character may not appeal to anyone old enough to pay for their own haircuts, it's true, but *Hoodlum Havoc* is looking promising despite that. And despite the frankly ludicrous storyline, too...

Previously happy-go-lucky creatures called Lums have been infected by a rogue comrade. This Lum saw something so terrifying it turned from a positive red being into a seeping evil black one,



THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS Rayman's world is a twisted one.

turning the other Lums into a mutant army of darkness in less time than it takes to say 'complete toss'. The Lums have become, wait for it, Hoodlums. Brilliant. So Rayman and his pal have to save the world through collecting stuff and jumping. There's some stuff about plum juice too. It's probably not important.

Nevertheless, the game itself looks good so far. It's smooth and [Rayman aside, in our opinion] attractively designed, with plenty of variety to your tasks. At one point, for instance, you must fly a space ship through caverns filled with dangerous spinning cogs to save yourself and your pal, Globox. At other times you switch to a first-person view as a tail-gunner, taking down armies of marauding aliens. You're as likely to be running round a spooky old house as tiptoeing around grassy ledges here, which is a relief. Rayman has abandoned his more tiresome platforming roots.

He's gained five new powers, including the ability to punch things really hard with the Power Fist. And while we're talking numbers, there are more than 20 enemies to try it all out on, spread through 44 levels, and each opponent promises

their own attack strategies. Ubi Soft is promising a more tactical experience than before, so you're going to have to think as well as fight, although not so hard the little kiddies get attention deficit disorder and run off in search of more Sunny D. Naturally there are the more traditional boss battles and mini-games to wrestle with as well, which only go to maintain interest. It's looking pretty good. But the real question is, can it beat lush new rival *Rotchet & Clank* for the crazed adventure crown? Well, we don't know. But we'll tell you when we do.

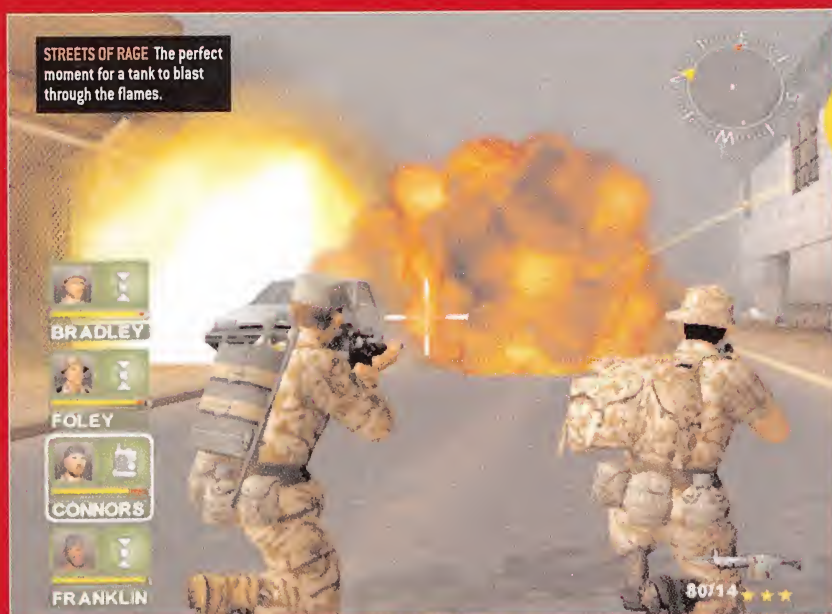
/ STEVEN WILLIAMS

FIRST OPINIONS

PSW

The first thing everyone noticed was how pretty this game is – Rayman's twisted world has never looked so intriguing. Of course, graphics aren't everything, but they certainly serve as a chocolate coating to increase the chances of players taking a bite. So will the gaming world spit or swallow once it's all done? We think you'll show how you love it.

"YOU'LL LOVE IT WHEN YOUR PLAN COMES TOGETHER"



ETA
OCTOBER
2002



AMBUSH Get your team in position quickly because the enemy don't hang around.

CONFLICT: DESERT STORM

THIS TEAM-BASED SHOOTER HAS READ BRAVO TWO ZERO AND WATCHED BLACK HAWK DOWN AND IT'S NOT AFRAID TO USE THEM.

TYPE SHOOTING

DISTRIBUTOR OZISOFT

GAME GLANCE

- / Control four man infiltration squads
- / A range of authentic Gulf War weaponry
- / 15 missions behind Iraqi enemy lines
- / Call in air strikes
- / Team develops skills through every mission

SEE IT ON DVD

- / Four blokes taking on the entire Iraqi army.
- / Rock hard men working in perfect harmony.

WITH OSAMA BIN LADEN STILL

feeding on the contents of his bug infested beard in some dank mountainous hole, the Afghan

conflict is probably still a little too recent and sensitive a game topic to let us rain a fiery retribution on his cowardly ass. Instead we'll have to make do with the second most recent war and head to the Gulf and ram those scuds back down Saddam's gob. (*Oh, the irony - Ed.*)

Conflict: Desert Storm follows the *Bravo Two Zero*-style of small unit infiltration into bandit territory. You're given full control over a four-man crew of SAS or Delta Force operatives tasked with

sabotaging the Iraqi war effort from within. Like *Project Eden*, you're only ever in full control of one squaddy at any time but can command the other three operatives with a selection of orders or switch control between the four at will.

A comprehensive tutorial introduces the numerous controls with the help of a fantastically clichéd drill sergeant à la *Full Metal Jacket*. Initially it can all be a little overwhelming and your first few forays into no man's land will be beset with unintended mishaps, selecting the wrong soldier, and double-tapping your comrade in the arse when you just meant to bring up the map. Thankfully the first few levels ease you in gently, enabling you to become *au fait* with the complicated controls.

Managing four different characters works well with their intelligent AI avoiding much of the clumsiness that blighted *Project Eden*. If Iraqi soldiers pop up out of the sand unexpectedly they'll respond by ducking for cover and returning fire when shot at. You can take over a particular soldier at any time or you can just witness the action through their eyes without actually taking manual control.

It's satisfying manoeuvring your men into position to lay a trap for a patrol and seeing your tactical machinations go off with clockwork

precision. And it's not immediately curtains, even if it doesn't all go quite as planned and you end up with half your team sprawled lifeless on the sand. You're given a three minute period where their life will slowly ebb away. Get to them with a medi-pack in time and witness a miraculous recovery.

This ability to resurrect your fallen comrades is significant, as although you can complete each of the 15 missions with just one man left you'll soon become very protective of your brave little soldiers. They gain experience that improves their aim and other abilities, which means you may face the moral dilemma of choosing whether to risk your other troops to save a man in trouble or leave him to his fate and risk a rookie for the next mission.

/ MIKEY FOLEY



PRIORITIES Okay team, protect that man Foley at all costs.

FIRST OPINIONS

PSW

If *Conflict: Desert Storm* can get the complicated business of controlling four soldiers simultaneously working in an uncomplicated fashion this could well be a very satisfying, thoughtful strategic challenge. The movement of the soldiers could still do with a bit of work as they're a bit cumbersome to manoeuvre at the moment.



SOLIDARITY COMRADE!

WE TOOK AN ICE PICK TO THE HEAD OF JAMES TSAI, ASSOCIATE PRODUCER FOR RED FACTION 2, TO DISCOVER VOLITION'S FIVE-YEAR PLAN FOR THEIR SOCIALIST SHOOTER SEQUEL.

What feedback did you receive from fans of the original *Red Faction*?

Though *Red Faction* was relatively well received by critics and fans, there were a lot of features that several people seemed to clamour for. We added the functionality to wield dual weapons, just like any good old Hollywood action film, as well as the ability to throw a grenade with your non-gun hand. We also finished putting in the USB support for the player and making it more user-friendly as opposed to having it as just a feature we were using during development.

Did you conduct any kind of in-house analysis on what you did right or wrong with the first game?

One of the first things we did when laying down the groundwork for *Red Faction 2* was an internal study of all the team members that worked on the original. We asked everyone to evaluate what areas of the game they felt could have been of higher quality and what additional resources, such as time or software, would have improved them. Team members were also encouraged to discuss the areas of the game they really enjoyed working on so we could pinpoint where our development strengths were. On top of that, THQ has conducted some gameplay focus tests for us with early builds of *Red Faction 2*, and we've made sure to read every last review and article that has an opinion on the original and expectations for the sequel.

Tell us about the plot behind *Red Faction 2* and how it relates to the original game.

The plot for *Red Faction 2* contains only limited reference to the original title. You'll see some of the same underlying themes, such as the advancement

of nanotechnology, but the cast of characters is new and the story is set on Earth. This allows us to be more liberal and aggressive with the design direction we took and also gives us an opportunity to expand our audience by reaching players not familiar with the original. I think fans of the first title and new players alike will really enjoy the plot in the sequel.

Does the game still have the same implicit political themes?

I think it's kind of a misconception that *Red Faction* contains a political slant – we genuinely were not trying to put forth political arguments in the first title, though in retrospect it's not surprising that some of the things were interpreted the way they were. As, or if, videogames become a more culturally accepted form of art down the road, I'm still not sure if we'll see them start to tackle political or emotional statements such as these. Just like in all other industries, the team working on the game is usually made up of several individuals from every corner of the political and social spectrum. It'd be hard to work on a game that goes against what you believe in, which would be bound to happen – so for the time being, we're going to focus on fun.

Since *Red Faction's* release titles like *Medal of Honor: Frontline* have raised the bar for console first-person shooters. What are your thoughts on the current state-of-the-art?

Everyone at Volition is a game developer, but we're also gaming fans. We anticipate the release of titles such as *Medal of Honor* or *Halo* not just because we want to

see what they've been able to accomplish from a development standpoint, but also because a lot of us really want to play something fun. When other significant titles come out we definitely pay attention; some of us will play the game and sort of dissect it – see what parts of that enigmatic "fun formula" they got right and what parts, if any, need improvement. Then we probably go home and play them for hours on end without doing all that critical analysis.

Do you consciously look at these games and think how you can do better?

We try not to rank ourselves against other games that come out, even in a genre that has as fixed a gameplay style as first-person shooters; there's a lot of diversity in design and different things each title tries to accomplish. We brought Geo-Mods to the table in *Red Faction*, for instance, which introduced a significant factor into the gameplay dynamic and makes it really difficult to do a direct comparison between us and other games which maybe did things a different way. Your design philosophy has to change to accommodate and incorporate features like that – we're just going to keep on doing what we've been doing, learning from the competition but not evaluating our worth against them.

First-person shooters tend to rely heavily on scripted events that are impressive the first time, but diminish replay value because they're no longer surprising. What's your take on this method of design?

I think *Red Faction 2* will stand up as a very action-oriented shooter. We'll have scripted events here and



KA-BOOM! Red Faction
excels at that perennial FPS
staple - blowing shit up.



there to communicate story events, make the world feel more alive, or provide some comic relief, but balancing and making the firefights and action sequences challenging and dynamic is something we really are striving for. As for my take on the scripting-heavy design philosophy, I think there's a fine line that the best games manage to tread carefully. Given the linear nature of games in general, there is naturally going to be some stuff that doesn't surprise you after you've seen it the first time. The trick is to make sure the events in between have enough variance and solutions so that the player feels like they're really experiencing a unique story rather than being led by the hand through a funhouse.

The player will be fighting alongside squad mates in Red Faction 2. How does this work and how large a role do these AI characters play in the game?

Your squad-mates in Red Faction 2 are fully-fledged characters with their own colourful background rather



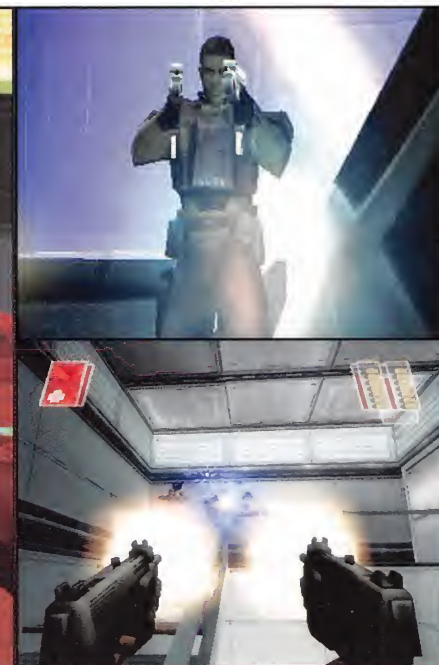
than faceless miner hordes that seem to get wasted the instant they round a corner. Each member of the group has their own combat specialty and appropriate weaponry, yours being demolitions and explosives, and each member of the squad plays a very prominent role in the plot. You'll be fighting alongside different ones throughout each level or getting messages and information from them in those moments where you don't have back-up. They'll cover you, help clear obstacles, lay down tons of fire at the opposition, and make you feel like part of a team rather than an individual soldier taking on the world.

Is this squad-based approach carried over to the enemies you fight?

In addition to squad-based friendly NPCs, you'll see enemies operate as squads as well throughout the game. The enemy AI groups can be set up where one is the squadron leader, and his actions and movement will somewhat govern the behaviour of the others. They recognise cover points in the level



LEGLESS You really shouldn't
drive in that condition, sir.





GIVIN' IT TO THE MAN Red Faction 2 still lets you blast the corporate goons.



and when to use them, leaning around corners or squatting behind boxes when they need to protect themselves from the player's line of fire. They'll displace away from you to get an opportunity to reload while the other AI lay down cover fire and continue to fight you, and will recognise when certain friends of theirs are killed or hurt in combat. Intelligent enemies that behave logically are important to all games, but especially so in genres such as FPS titles.

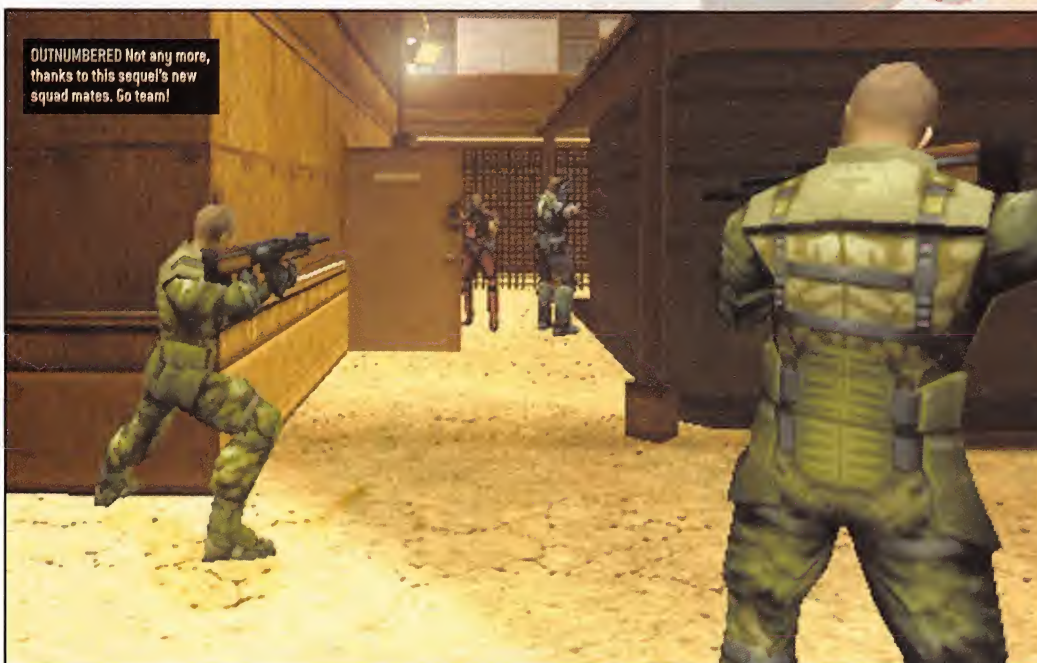
The fact that the player assumes the role of a demolitions expert implies an even greater focus on environmental destruction this time. Will the Geo-Mod technology have a bigger impact on the gameplay than in the original?

We've taken a lot of steps to integrate Geo-Mods more into *Red Faction 2*, from both technological and design standpoints. The Geo-Mod engine has undergone a lot of optimisations and tweaks to make it more efficient. We've also added a

destructible brush feature, which allows us to make environments reflect far more damage than we could have previously. Destructible brushes are level geometry that can withstand a finite amount of damage before being destroyed in a pre-determined fashion, which essentially makes it fast scripted destruction. Coupled with the arbitrary destruction you can achieve with Geo-Mods, we give the player the power to affect a lot of damage on their surroundings.

Similarly, have you enhanced the role vehicles play in the game?

Vehicles are prominently featured in *Red Faction 2*, but we don't offer the same kind of freedom as found in *Halo* where you could pretty much hop in and out at will and drive anywhere the level geometry would allow you to. Our controllable vehicles will be used once again to traverse certain types of environments where going it on foot proves to be a lot more dangerous.



OUTNUMBERED Not any more, thanks to this sequel's new squad mates. Go team!





Something new that we're doing in addition to these is featuring several non-controllable vehicles where you hop in the gunner's seat and lay waste to your enemies and surroundings with some heavy duty firepower. So instead of dogfighting one-on-one with other fighters in a narrow subterranean tunnel where you had to avoid bashing into walls, there are spots where you'll be thrown into a 360 degree battle and forced to defend your craft from every angle. Those players that loved hopping in the Warthog gunner seat in *Halo* will eat this stuff up. You won't be piloting these particular vehicles, so you can give your full attention to the shooting.

Describe some of the new weapons the player will have access to, and also any other non-weapon items with which you can interact with the world.

The arsenal is pretty extensive: assault rifles, sniper rifles, grenade launchers, pistols, sub-machine and full machine-guns, grenades, and shotguns. You'll also find some nanotech enhanced weapon variations that can only be used by the members of your squad. We don't have things like triple laser beams or plasma goop guns, however – those are awesome weapons in certain contexts, but the feel of the *Red Faction 2* story didn't leave a lot of room for the more fantasy-style guns such as those. As far as non-weapon items, there are things like health kits or night-vision goggles that you'll be carrying with you but certainly nothing to the extent of what you'd find in a game such as *Deus Ex*. Beginning to end, we're a fast paced action game and want to keep the emphasis on FPS traditionals.

We've heard there might be multiple endings based on player actions. How do you plan to implement this?

Your actions throughout the game will determine which of the endings you'll get. The storyline does not branch into separate plots, however – the end sequence is rather a function of how heroic you are throughout the course of the adventure. In the final game we may give some overt indication as to what actions will make you be perceived as heroic or wretched, but we also may decide to make it more subtle than that after feedback from our test team and such.

Finally, how important is a multiplayer component to *Red Faction 2*? There will be four-player split-screen deathmatch, but what other modes are featured? Did you give any consideration to a co-operative mode?

Deathmatch is flanked by all new multiplayer capture-the-flag, arena, and bagman (reverse tag) modes with team options. Gamers who are experienced with the original *Red Faction* will notice immediately how much we've expanded upon multiplayer – we've more maps, more features, more players, customisable bots, you name it. We've been working hard to improve the features and performance of this part of the game and Outrage, another THQ studio that we're very close with, have helped out tremendously with the level design. Co-operative mode is something a lot of us really wanted to do – there was a fair amount of thought and initial design on paper but ultimately the idea gave way to the other needs of the project.

Thanks for your time, James.



GEO-MODS IN ACTION
Glass exploding in a ball of flame. Pretty, huh?



GameCube

Xbox

PC

PlayStation 2

Game Boy Advance

PSone

**YOUR GUIDE TO THE
FUTURE OF GAMING
AND BEYOND!**

HYPER»»

AUSTRALIA'S GAMING AUTHORITY

REVIEWS

ATTENTION! THIS SECTION CONTAINS EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO DECIDE WHAT TO BUY, AND WHAT TO LEAVE ALONE.

MEET THE TEAM

HELLO, WE'RE THE TEAM, AND WE'RE PLEASED TO MEET YOU, TOO.

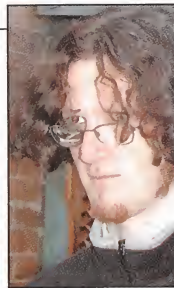


/ DAVID WILDGOOSE EDITOR

Game of the month: *Timesplitters 2*. Natch.

Timesplitters 2 should have included: An ancient Greek setting, around the 5th century BC. You could go back, kill Plato before he wrote the *Republic* and save western civilisation from the evils of fascism. Just a thought.

Looking forward to: *Project Zero*. Survival horror without the guns. And with a camera instead. Oh, and a cute Japanese schoolgirl. Who wouldn't be interested in it?



/ DANIEL STAINES WRITER

Game of the month: *Grand Theft Auto 3*. How much more of this game do I have to play? Stupid playguide magazine.

Timesplitters 2 should have included: The Russian Revolution, if only so I could show off my amazing knowledge of the events leading up to it and their subsequent impact on life as we know it.

Looking forward to: *Onimusha 2*. I'm playing it right now actually. [Grrr! - Ed.] Oh, look, I think someone's a bit jealous.

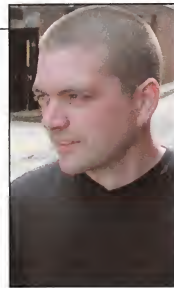


/ JOHN DEWHURST WRITER

Game of the month: *Mat Hoffman 2*. Proof that two wheels are better than four. Just get rid of those bloody time limits next time, eh Activision?

Timesplitters 2 should have included: Redfern circa 2002. Drug dealers, street gangs, that crazy woman who's always at the bus stop - it's a dangerous place, I tell you!

Looking forward to: Jetting off to London for ECTS.



/ STEVEN WILLIAMS WRITER

Game of the month: *V8 Supercars*. That Ryan McKane is a bit of a tool, though. However, racing around Mt Panorama more than makes up for it.

Timesplitters 2 should have included: More monkeys. In fact, I wouldn't have been disappointed if every enemy in the game was of a simian persuasion. I know I am.

Looking forward to: *GTA: Vice City*. I've been flexing my exquisite vocal cords to top 80s tunes all month. [You really should hear his version of 'Boom Boom Boom' - Ed.]

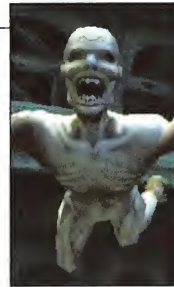


/ MIKEY FOLEY WRITER

Game of the month: *The Two Towers*. It's just like *Golden Axe*, but just ten years later. Fantastic!

Timesplitters 2 should have included: A deathmatch mode I could actually win at. Perhaps one where you gain points for being shot. Or for running into walls.

Looking forward to: *Onimusha 2*. Forget the cool as hell combat bits, I'm intrigued by the concept of walking around and giving gifts to complete strangers.



/ MARCH STEPNIK WRITER

Game of the month: Not *Stuntman*, that's for sure. [Good, we can't afford to replace the broken control pads anyway - Ed.] I'll have to say *AFL Live*, then.

Timesplitters 2 should have included: Some garden gnome decorations for the Mapmaker. No landscaping job is complete without those crazy guys.

Looking forward to: *Turok Evolution*. Dinosaurs and big, big guns. They can't possibly mess up that combination...

THE SCORING SYSTEM

PSW RATINGS

THE PSW SCORING SYSTEM IS DESIGNED TO MAKE ALL YOUR GAMES PURCHASING DECISIONS SIMPLE. HERE'S HOW TO TRANSLATE THOSE NUMBERS INTO DEFINITIVE ADJECTIVES.

10/10	ESSENTIAL
9/10	BRILLIANT
8/10	GREAT
7/10	GOOD
6/10	DECENT
5/10	AVERAGE
4/10	POOR
3/10	BAD
2/10	BLOODY RUBBISH
1/10	AVOID AT ALL COSTS



PSW GAME OF THE MONTH

The Game of the Month Award is precisely what it says, the title that in PSW's opinion is the essential purchase of the month. In the event of multiple games receiving the same score, we simply pick the one we think is the must-have option if you can only afford one game a month. Go and buy it now. Run!



PSW MUST BUY

Typically awarded to games that score 8/10 or above, representing one of the best in its genre. So if you're a fan of this particular type of game, then you'll be more than happy with this purchase. Simply, if you like this type of game, you 'must buy'. Clever eh?

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PS2 NEW RELEASES

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ONE DAY REVIEWS WILL BE 3D HOLOGRAMS SPINNING SILENTLY ABOVE YOUR WATCH, BUT UNTIL THEN, WE'LL USE PIECES OF PAPER STUCK TOGETHER. TRY NOT TO MIX THEM UP, NOW.

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TIMESPLITTERS 2

IS THIS THE GREATEST SHOOTER EVER MADE? ANSWERS OVER THE PAGE...

TYPE	SHOOTER
PLAYERS	1-8
OUT	SEPTEMBER 27
DISTRIBUTOR	OZISOFT
PRICE	\$99.95
DEVELOPER	FREE RADICAL
RATED	M15+

BLIMEY. WE ALWAYS KNEW IT WAS going to be good. But this good? Uh-uh. Nope. No sir-ee. Not in all our wildest dreams did we envisage a shooter could ever be this slick, this polished, this immaculate, this sublimely playable, this god-damned entertaining. *Timesplitters 2* is an absolutely, undeniably, and irrevocably stunning achievement. Yes, it's that good.

Let's take a closer look at what Brit developer Free Radical Design has done here. As you may know, *Timesplitters* was not only the finest title available at launch but (despite the protestations of the pro-PES contingent in the office – that's you

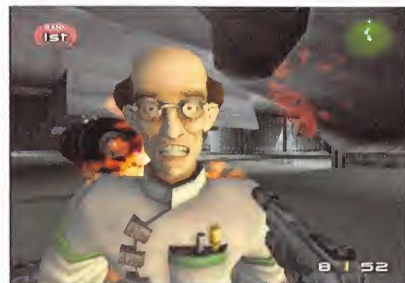
Jackson, and you're completely wrong.) remains the crowning glory of multiplayer escapades on PS2. Perhaps the most impressive fact is that it took the handful of former Rare coders (key Free Radical personnel were largely responsible for the exquisite *Goldeneye*) a mere twelve months, from concept to gold master, to cobble together the original time-warping masterpiece in time for the PS2's launch. When you consider the development cycle of the average game is between 18 months and two years, it's clear *Timesplitters* simply had no right to be as good as it ultimately turned out to be.

For this sequel, Free Radical not only has the experience of developing two system-selling first-person shooters to draw upon, its also had close to twice as much time to perfect its creation. If a well above average developer can produce a stellar title in far less than average time, one wonders what they could possibly come up with when afforded

the latitude to leisurely take their time.

Not that it's been all fun and games for the Free Radical team over the past two years (we'll leave the office skateboarding to a certain rival console maker, thanks very much). Indeed, the extra time has been wisely devoted towards ensuring *Timesplitters 2* improves on its predecessor in every aspect and leaves its competitors in the genre (*Medal of Honor*, *007*, *Red Faction*, et al) to contemplate why they even bother. Justified criticisms of the paucity of the original's single-player mode have been addressed beyond the call of duty, while the already exemplary deathmatch is now – unbelievably – markedly superior. With this one title, the *Timesplitters* series now stands at the pinnacle of the solo and multiplayer first-person shooter experience.

So how did they do it? Let's begin by perusing the all-new, "Hey, it's got a proper story and everything!" single-player mode. And, whaddya know, it does have



CAVERN CHAOS It's safe to say deathmatch can be quite hectic.

DENTAL PERFECTION Let's knock some of those teeth out for you.



a proper story and everything. Well, not everything, but all the telltale signs of an artfully constructed and well thought out narrative are evident for all to see. There are even real cut-scenes this time, and they tell you what to do and why it's all happening. Hurrah!

As in the first game, the nasty Timesplitters are at it again, leaping throughout history and altering the space-time continuum for their own devious, selfish and indisputably evil purposes. They possess a time portal, you see, powered by those ubiquitous and frighteningly multi-functional time crystals, which enables them to warp to any time period they desire and kill things, smash the place up and generally make life unpleasant.

Understandably perturbed by such chronic chaos, the human race (in a rare display of unity) tasks an elite troop of marines to track the Timesplitters through history and recover the nine time crystals.

When you zip through time, you assume the body, personality and profession of someone from that particular period. Essentially, this means he or she comes with a whole new set of mission objectives on top of your primary task of retrieving the time crystals. So you might find yourself taking down mobsters in Prohibition-era Chicago or fighting a gang war with cyberpunks on the streets of Tokyo or shutting down hideous genetic experiments in an isolated Russian research lab.

New objectives appear as you play through a level and encounter unexpected twists and turns, so at any one time you may well have upwards of five primary objectives plus a handful of secondary ones, too. Compared to the bare-bones simplicity of the original game, this comes as something of a revelation. The mission structure overall is superb – at least on a par with *Goldeneye*, if not marginally

superior. You're constantly kept on your toes and forced to adapt to changing circumstances.

From the frontier towns of Wild West to the Akira-esque neon sprawl of Neo-Tokyo, the environments all possess a distinct flavour and atmosphere. Whether it's battling zombies through the Notre Dame cathedral or blasting monkeys (yes, monkeys!) on the surreal Planet X, the story mode continually launches curve-balls to keep you guessing. There's never a dull or predictable moment, that's for sure. It's as if Free Radical made nine separate games then distilled the best bits of each, repackaged it and called it *Timesplitters 2*.

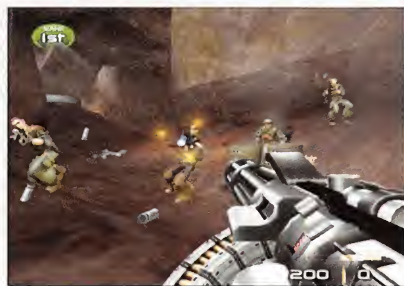
Thus the scene is set for nine otherwise inexplicably diverse locations and plenty of projectile powered violence. So, cast aside your concerns regarding time-travelling paradoxes and just dive in, soak up the exuberant comic vibe, and get blasting.

Or not, as the case may be. While *Timesplitters 2* is what could be superficially labeled "action-packed", it is also notably less focused upon wanton destruction than its earlier incarnation. This time the emphasis is placed upon killing as an art form. Whereas the first game was distinguished by frantic firefights in which a successful outcome was totally dependent on your finger's speed on the trigger, here the thoughtful player is far more likely to be rewarded than the gun-crazy maniac.

In large part this is due to the massive improvements undertaken to the AI. No longer do enemies stand idly by while your bullets turn their nearby comrades to pin-cushions. Instead, they react to gunfire and fallen friends – miss an enemy with the sniper rifle and you'll see him flinch as the bullet whistles past his ear, then duck for the nearest cover and attempt to locate your position. In a firefight,



VANTAGE POINT Gun turrets make short work of opponents.



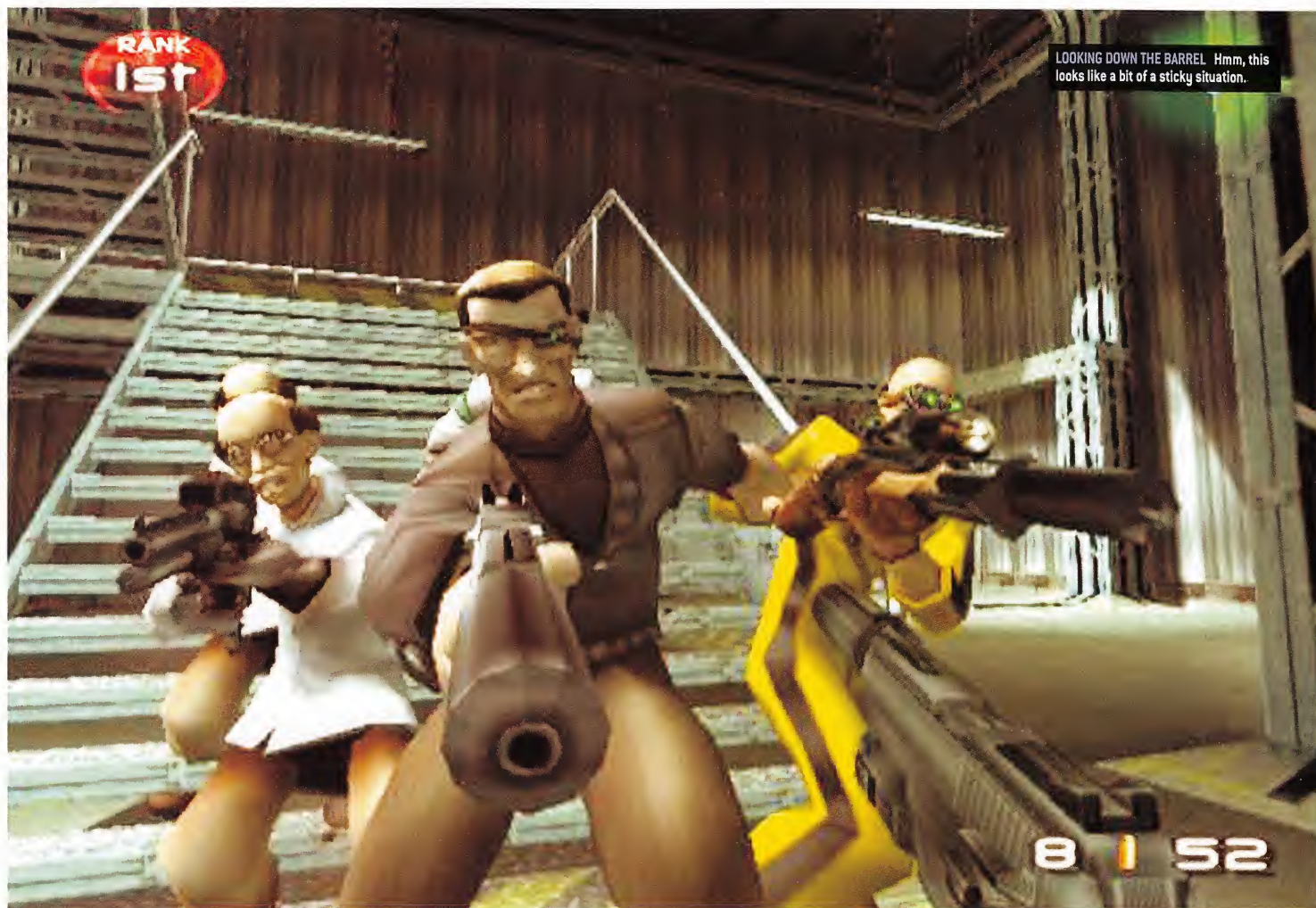
OUTNUMBERED Hey, stop ganging up on me!

STOP LOOKING AT MY SCREEN!

THE MULTIPLAYER MODES OF *TIMESPLITTERS 2*, IN A BIG LIST FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE.

DEATHMATCH	Oh come on, you know what a deathmatch is by now.
TEAM DEATHMATCH	As above, only with sides. Shirts and skins, if you will.
ELIMINATION	A deathmatch with fatal consequences – lose and you're out.
BAG TAG	Keep hold of a bag to win. Get it, then hide.
CAPTURE THE BAG	Steal the enemy satchel and take it home to score a point. Repeat.
FLAME TAG	Tag an opponent to set them on fire and extinguish yourself!
VIRUS	Flame Tag, but you don't go out when passing it on. <i>Everybody</i> burns.
ASSAULT	Capture the base. Use any means necessary. Even guns.
FIREFIGHT	Keep an area burning – enemy has to extinguish the fire!
REGENERATION	A deathmatch where you slowly get better over time.
THIEF	Steal the kill-count of any opponents you destroy.
POSSESSION	Stealing kills again, only now returning to base to rack them up.
OGRE	Um... there's an ogre in the level. Kill him/her/it for rewards.
LEECH	A deathmatch where attacking others siphons their health to yours.
SHRINK	Enemies regenerate smaller each time they're killed!
VAMPIRE	Kill people to stay alive. No actual blood-sucking involved.
MONKEY ASSISTANT	The player in last place has a monkey with a gun to help them. Really.
FRUSTRATE DANIEL STAINES	An office fave. We beat Daniel on any of the above until he gets angry and gives up. Five points if he throws a pad, 50 if he walks off and goes home.





/ HUMAN LIFE HAS TAKEN ON MUCH MORE IMPORTANCE IN TS2 /

they'll hunt you down, utilise nearby cover and even call in reinforcements when the going gets tough.

Against smarter enemies, you've got to play smarter in order to defeat them. In a nutshell, you've got to plan your incursion into enemy territory and out-think your polygonal opponents. To aid you in all things covert, your pockets conveniently contain a nifty device called a Temporal Uplink. When equipped it displays (in funky futuristic neon blue) a small map of the immediate environment with enemies and other objects of interest represented by coloured blobs. Yes, essentially it's just a radar, but the way it's shown as being held in your hand, rather than the typical box dumped into the corner of the screen, serves to illustrate the studious attention to detail

present throughout the entire game. It also looks incredibly cool, so bonus marks for that.

There are other cool high-tech gadgets to play with as well, most of which we'd dearly love to see featured in *Stuff* (p94) every month. Notably, the aptly titled Robot Factory level boasts a collection of mobile security cameras for you to hijack and remotely use to scout around the level, blast unsuspecting enemies or open otherwise inaccessible doors. Each time period possesses an historically appropriate assortment of such contraptions, providing a regular supply of neat things to do aside from simply shooting everything in sight.

However, most of the situations you find yourself in are best handled with a gun, preferably one that

kills as many things as quickly and quietly as possible. To this end, the disparate time zones hold an equally disparate array of weapons, from silenced pistols and flamethrowers to tommy guns, plasma rifles and the return of the sci-fi handgun (which should bring a tear to the eye of any *TS* veteran).

Where this dizzying arsenal really comes into its own though, is in multiplayer. Always *Timesplitters*' shining light, the deathmatching experience now has to meet the challenge of an exceptional story mode. Fortunately multiplayer has been enhanced to the same extent – it's different, sure, but certainly all the better for it.

The most noticeable change is in the damage department – it now takes a lot more effort to kill



MALNOURISHED He's so skinny he just floats through the air.

BURN BABY BURN

We have already grown to love the potential of fire in *TimeSplitters 2*. A new weapon is the dynamite barrel, which in superb cartoon style may be used to leave a trail of gunpowder behind you, down a corridor, round a corner and leading to wherever you like. A flamethrower or rocket launcher ignites the powder, sending a flame fizzing along the line to catch alight its target. Watch in doubled over amusement as he then tries to flee to the nearest pool of water to extinguish the blaze. Then shoot him in the back of the head.



CAMARADERIE A highlight is the two-player co-operative mode. Twice the fun, even!



I'VE GOT A HUNCH Famed bell-ringer Quasimodo makes an appearance in the Notre Dame level.



OOH, A WATERFALL. Is there a secret behind the waterfall? We're not telling.

people. Not just one extra shot, either. The damage bar, which before used to disappear quicker than sweets around an obese child, now stubbornly lessens segment by painful segment, requiring the constant thrashing of an enemy to break him down. A man with a shotgun is no longer the threat he was in *TS*, with one-on-one battles taking quite a bit longer to reach a conclusion. An assault shotgun with both barrels to the face will still take a man out in one go, but the physical closeness required to pull that off makes it a rare event.

Victories seem to mean more now that it requires such an effort to kill a man, with the bang-dead-respawn-bang-dead-respawn speedy approach of the original gone. Human life has taken on much more importance in *Timesplitters 2*. Surviving a firefight is now much more likely, the tension raising another notch each time you run away to re-health and return to re-engage your opponent. The emphasis has switched away from toe-to-toe blasting and placed upon strategic thinking, planning ahead and accurate shooting.

So, if you prefer your first-person shooters in the company of others, don't worry about the alleged focus on enhancing the single-player game, the multiplayer section is equally crammed full of new ideas and staggering gameplay potential. Personally though, I'd suggest opting for the co-operative mode where you can play through the full single-player story mode with a friend. It's the stuff for which split-screen gaming was invented – outflanking surprised

enemies, laying down suppression fire while your partner legs it in front of some snipers, or simply sharing the satisfaction of finally completing an especially troublesome mission. Genius.

Wherever you want to look, *Timesplitters 2* is just so incredibly polished in every aspect. It feels great, the controls are perfect, it looks and sounds utterly superb, it's a multiplayer fan's nirvana, and the single-player game is the most complete yet on PS2. It's rare (forgive the pun) that a game comes along and gets it so right in every department. *Timesplitters 2* is a thing of rare beauty. As such, there's only one score we can award...

/DAVID WILDGOOSE

VERDICT		PSW
UPPERS	DOWNERS	
- Brilliantly inventive design	- Nothing	
- Compelling single-player story	- Nada	
- Classy multiplayer modes	- Nil	
- Did we say its genius?	- You're kidding, right?	
GRAPHICS	- Silky framerates and gorgeous locales	10
SOUND	- Excellent effects and quality tunes	9
LIFESPAN	- You'll never stop playing deathmatch	10
OVERALL SCORE		10
The most polished, complete and entertaining game we've seen in years. This is the best first-person shooter on PS2, bar none. Perhaps even the console's finest game fullstop.		



WHERE'S INDY? Watching the movie trailers is some small reward for the tears of frustration.

STUNTMAN

THE TREND TOWARD GAMES EMULATING FILM CONTINUES WITH THIS UNUSUAL TAKE.

TYPE	RACING
PLAYERS	1
OUT	NOW
DISTRIBUTOR	OZISOFT
PRICE	\$99.95
DEVELOPER	REFLECTIONS
RATED	G8+

ON THE SET OF STUNTMAN...

Director: "Cut! Let's try that again, shall we?"

Stuntman: "What, you mean take 31?"

I reckon we should —"

Director: "Shut it! You're not paid for your opinion!"

Stuntman: "Well, sod you for a joke! You call these reasonable working conditions? I'll have the union on you, I'll have! They'll tear you to shreds! Three-minute-multi-stunt sequences? That's mad!"

Director: "You worthless monkey! Do you have any idea how many other stuntmen would kill to be in your shoes right now? I dare you to walk off this set right now!"

Stuntman: "Well, &*\$! Right then, uh... back to it... uh, again."

Stuntman, the game, is exhilarating. *Stuntman* is challenging. *Stuntman* is also barely forgiving. And more than anything else, *Stuntman* is almost prohibitively frustrating.

Which is most disappointing because *Stuntman* should have been a five star title. It comes deceptively close — there are plenty of truly satisfying and fun moments to be had. However, any lasting joy is held back by a small number of absolutely critical oversights made by the game's developer, Reflections. The most obvious is the exceedingly high difficulty level, as is the lack of game options. But more than anything, *Stuntman* lacks a refined, polished feel to proceedings. In fact, after playing through a good chunk of the game you might even be given the impression that the game was given a (perhaps a forced?) premature release.

FILM CAREER

The concept itself - to start at the beginning - is simply fantastic, and a logical extension to Reflections' most recent titles *Driver* and *Driver 2*. Where these two games had you performing some movie-like feats on four wheels to fulfil your mission objectives, *Stuntman* goes straight to the source. You play the role of a stunt car driver at the beginning your journey up the ranks of the stunt work ladder. What follows is the stuff of which blockbuster movie magnetism is made: you fishtail, dodge, weave, jump over and generally hoon through traffic and all manner of large and not-so-large stationary objects in search of that perfect and ever-exceedingly overblown stunt sequence.

This is *Stuntman*'s career mode - the absolute core of the game — and where you spend most of your time. The execution is straight-forward enough: after a short briefing, you're thrust in the drivers seat of your car and given instructions from the director via radio as to how complete the scene (bright yellow icons also pop up onscreen to visually highlight a stunt direction). Making it to the end of the two-minute average stunt sees you awarded with an accuracy rating (the percentage of stunts you completed to instruction) and, if successful, your wages, progress to other scenes, and if the rating is high enough, a car and a object for one of the other game modes — the Stunt Arena.

Once you've completed the handful of sequences that make up that movie, *Stuntman* plays a trailer of that film — where the CG pre-



FLYING HIGH Sure to please thousands of obese American trailer trash.



HERITAGE LISTED Ancient ruins reduced to mere obstacle course.



COMPENSATION If cars are phallic symbols, then we wonder what these huge wheels mean?



DO THE RIGHT THING No, no, no... Cut! You were meant to sideswipe the trash can, you fool!

/ YOU FISHTAIL, DODGE, WEAVE, JUMP OVER AND GENERALLY HOON THROUGH TRAFFIC /

rendered sequences are interspersed with in-game video of your actual stunt efforts – and then gives you a nice diversion in the form of a one-off daredevil stunt arena stunt to perform. Once done, progress to the next film is made. These fictitious movies that you contribute to are all send-ups of popular action sub-genres, and their inspiration (read: blatant rip-off) have been made obvious by *Reflections*. There are six of them in, with each set in various locations around the world and require differing vehicles and types of stunts as a result. Starting with the relatively low budget “Toothless in Wapping” which is shot in London and resembles a Guy Ritchie effort (except thankfully not his Madonna-related works), you progress through the heart of rural America in a “Whoopin’ and a Hollerin’” (the *Dukes of Hazard* stage), Bangkok for the bigger budget John Woo-style martial arts film, and beyond to the major players in block buster movies (yer James Bonds and Indiana Jones wannabes).

This is where *Reflections* has turned on the shine. The environments themselves are well-designed, and visually solid. The game’s artists travelled to the locations in which the films are set and created a reference library of photos numbering in the thousands, and the work has paid off. The result is that levels do their particular



WOO-HOO Of course, a real Woo film would have dual guns.



PETROL... BOMBS Fortunately the explosion doesn't destroy your car.



STUNT ARENA Perhaps the game's most enjoyable mode. Shame it's so short.

real-life location some justice – in both the overall architecture and the texture mapping – and that suspension of disbelief is made rather easily. For example, the game’s first stage – London – sees you negotiating a claustrophobic inner-city setting, with most stunts requiring the mastery of many a tight turn between large buildings. This contrasts strongly to the next film you work on – *A Whoopin’ and a Hollerin’* – which features vast open spaces occasionally besotted with buildings and other such structures. Even the town’s centre remains true to form – rather than the high-rise, large city feel of London and even downtown Bangkok, you’ve got the “urban, spaced-out” sprawl of middle America reproduced authentically.

The stunts themselves are nothing short of

spectacular. How does driving off an overhead pass onto a moving train, making your way up the carriages to avoid overhead obstacles then leaping off the moving train on to a passing station sound? Or ducking and weaving through traffic, then doing the same against the flow of traffic? Corkscrew jumps? Nitro-assisted flight? All in a day’s work for a stuntman.

LET'S DO THAT AGAIN

So far so good – and on casual acquaintance, *Stuntman* does surely impress. However, upon further inspection, what can seem like innocuous little cracks reveal serious flaws in its structural integrity. *Stuntman* is not a game which is let down by just one show-stopping flaw. It's fundamental game design on a number of levels that deflates the experience.

Where to start? Firstly, it's the game's difficulty level. The reward for bugging up your stunt is a cut and another attempt at the same sequence. The catch: there are plenty of opportunities to bugger up the stunt. Sequences run from 2 to 3 minutes long, and contain around a dozen individual stunts.

What's worse, *Stuntman* leaves a miniscule margin for error. The stunts are meticulously timed, and a strong sense of urgency is created via the many time gates one must get through. Fall behind, and the scene is cut. Crash, and the scene is cut. Miss a major stunt – cut! Sure, this is the essence of



BRING BACK ARNIE Play spot the filmic rip-off... er, influence.



STRESS RELIEF Alleviate pent up anger by smashing a row of cars.

/ SMACK!
YOU'VE HIT
AN
INVISIBLE
WALL
AMONGST
ALL THAT
WOODY
FIBRE /

stuntwork, and these dynamics as presented by Reflections are true to real form. However, in videogame land, things shouldn't be so unforgiving as to take the joy away from the experience. Yet the developer succeeds at this. It's all or nothing in *Stuntman*: approach it with caution and the game will beat you. And yet there's no detailed briefing of the upcoming stunt (as your own stuntman ironically asserts in the game's intro video – preparation is the key) to ease you into play. So you start at the mercy of your stunt director's instructions, and the many stunt and direction icons that appear onscreen. Annoyingly, these directions aren't always clear. There's often a lag between the director's ranting and the onscreen cue, so you'll often be asking "where do you want me to take that left?" By virtue of the intense pace and fluid physics

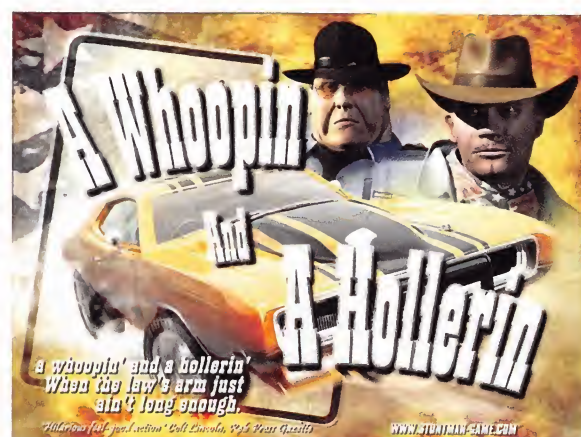
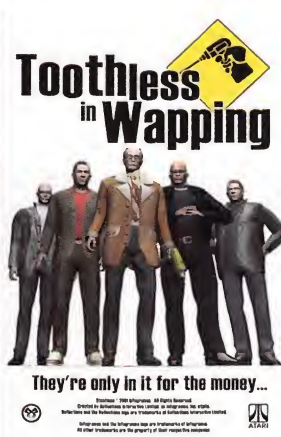
engine you're often not in a position to even see where the next stunt icon is. By the time you find it, "Cut! Too slow... let's try again".

DEEPENING FRUSTRATION

The lack of direction can be overcome, of course, and this requires naught else but becoming increasingly familiar with your route and their objectives. Repetition serves you well here, so why didn't Reflections include a detailed briefing and a map in the first place and save us all a bit of a headache? How about a directional arrow to your next objective? Perhaps an easier difficulty setting as an alternative – even more time between objectives would be welcome? What's also missing is a time-free mode, where you can amble on through the set at your own pace, observing what

you'll soon be up against. Nope, all your observations have to be made at the intense pace Reflections has set.

The frustration deepens at the stunts themselves. Swerve a little too far to the left – you've hit a car. Take the corner to late – bam! – hello wall. Mistime the ramp – crunch! – you're sandwiched between two trains travelling in opposite directions. Drive through a billboard a little off-centre – smack! – you've hit an invisible wall amongst all that woody fibre. Worse is when you misjudge a manoeuvre after the framerate takes a dive during some of the more graphically intensive sections. The frustration reaches a peak when you're on your 35th attempt on a particular sequence, near the very end, and because you're unfamiliar with the later stages of that run you realise a little too late that when the director yells "take the



AN ALAN SMITH FILM Okay, there's the Indiana Jones one... the Chow Yun Fat one... the Cockney crime caper one... and the Dukes of Hazzard one. Not a bad quadruple bill really, all things considered.

HOLDEN PRECISION DRIVING TEAM

In the game's second movie — *A Whoopin' and a Hollerin'* — one of the minor stunts involves driving between two trees. The trouble is, the gaps only just big enough for your car, so more often than not ending crashing the car and ending the stunt. As this stunt is situated past the halfway mark of the sequence, guess how much has to be repeated before you get another attempt between the trees. Yep. First it's frustrating, then it becomes tiresome. So instead, just avoid the gap and coast on by the left side. Saves yourself the stress and only takes a minimal chunk out of your accuracy rating.



VARIED VEHICLES Risk your life going All-terrain in some unorthodox contraptions



jump to the left!" he's expecting you to remember the exact trajectory as covered in the pre-stunt briefing — that naturally didn't occur. Cut! Restart. No. *FUCK!*

So for some respite and to clear your mind of frustration, you try the other game modes available — Driving Games and Stunt Arena. The latter sounds the most promising, however that illusion quickly vanishes. Stunt Arena would be full of all sorts of fun stunts to do, however you've got to first put them in yourself. No sample maps to just play on, or inspire you. Furthermore, the larger components for use in the editor have to be unlocked via the career mode first.... What's more, the maps are rather limiting in regards to the number of large objects you can place at one time.

On to the Driving games. These are made up of three tests. The precision tests, like the career mode, also lack any clear instruction, so next! The speed tests must be unlocked first, and they offer time trial racing of the movie locations you've worked on. Déjà vu anyone? The most enjoyable of the three are without a doubt the stunt tests. Ten tokens, scattered around a track made up of all manner of ramps, jumps and obstacles, must be collected. Just for the satisfaction, of course. And this has to be unlocked first too...

The real tragedy of *Stuntman* is that its core game mode — Career — isn't strongly supported by any other attraction. As it stands, *Stuntman* is a one-trick pony. Even the core difficulty of the main game could be forgiven if *Reflections* made the

extra effort to include some more relevant and enjoyable game modes, or at least polished up the ones already present. How difficult would it have been to include a two-player race mode? Or a couple of Stunt Arena maps ready to play? Or allow you to play through the Career sequences without a time limit? If *Reflections* can address these issues in a possible sequel, then *Stuntman 2* would indeed be a revelation. This *Stuntman*, however, is oppressively challenging, and probably best experienced (and the burden shared) with a bunch of your loud and drunk mates.

/March Stepnik

VERDICT

PSW

UPPERS

- Strong level design
- Challenging gameplay
- Fresh game concept
- Fun

DOWNERS

- Frustratingly hard
- Gives the QA Tester gig a bad rep
- Limited options
- Frame rate problems

GRAPHICS • Detailed yet washed out — think GTA3

7

SOUND • Repetition is a killer

6

LIFESPAN • The career mode will satisfy — but that's all

5

OVERALL SCORE

Stuntman is incomplete. With a bit more polish, *Stuntman* would have shone brightly indeed. Instead, it will satisfy hardcore gamers, during those few moments when it doesn't confound.

6



V8 SUPERCARS RACE DRIVER



THE TIN-TOPS TAKE ON THE RACING WORLD – AND COME OUT ON TOP. GO RYAN! GO RYAN!

TYPE	RACING
PLAYERS	1-4
OUT	NOW
DISTRIBUTOR	OZISOFT
PRICE	\$99.95
DEVELOPER	CODEMASTERS
RATED	G

SEE IT ON DVD

- / Smoking tyres
- / Sliding super-saloons
- / Messy crashes
- / Nice cars, all skirted up

FORMULA 1 SHOULD DIE. AND here's a game willing to staple the plush red lining into the coffin. Real touring car racing is far more entertaining than real F1, and *V8 Supercars Race Driver* is far more fun than the slew of F1 sims. If you're a motorsport fan, this is the place to be. Codemasters has put a lot of effort into making this experience different, not just from the previous PSone games (the first *Toca Touring Cars*, its sequel and *World Touring Cars*) but from all other racers. The most obvious component of this is the story. It has one. The intention is to draw you further into the racing world, to cast you as the race driver of the title, and in its way it works. Obviously it's nothing like as deep as, say, *Silent Hill 2* or any other narrative-based game, but the cut-scenes keep you hooked nonetheless. The travails of Ryan McKane are told in brief shots lasting 30-50 seconds each, popping up only occasionally. You'll probably only see one every two hours or so, as Codemasters was careful not to forget why we're here: to race. Nothing gets in the way of that.



HEAD IN HANDS Ryan's young and angry. He's got issues.

IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT

Interestingly, none of the races are fixed. Although you race against characters with some dubious intentions towards you, they're not programmed to do anything to you or to anyone else just to forward the story. That would interfere with the sport of it all, and Codemasters (rightly, in our opinion) believes that's not desirable. It also means that your performance can affect the story's outcome, although it stops short of being an alternative ending – fail in your ultimate quest to win the world championship and you see a different cut-scene, but the game carries on. You can try again next season, and if and when you prevail you finally see the proper conclusion. That's not all: it's only by winning the world title that you unlock the extra Elite mode. But more of that in a minute. Maybe five minutes. It all depends how fast you read.

RANDALL AND MCKANE (DECEASED)

And first, we'd better explain who Ryan McKane is. He's the younger brother of Donnie McKane, an

already famous and successful racer. But there's more than one shadow over Ryan: the pair's father, Kyle, was himself a driving ace, and many of his peers are still involved in the scene in managerial and other roles. Worse, Kyle is just a venerated memory, as he dies fifteen years before the game's events takes place in a controversial post-chequered flag crash caused by a certain James Randall. Both Ryan and Donnie witness it, yet they're still both racing drivers and not florists or photocopier maintenance men or something. Maybe they've got very short memories. So once the story gets going there's needle between the brothers. Suspicious accidents come calling for those close to Ryan, and a new teammate who gets, for want of a better phrase, on Ryan's tits, stirs up the proceedings.

We've seen the end. We won't give it away. The story's hardly Tolstoy in its incisive social observations and touching characterisations, but it's certainly entertaining. There's a fair cast of strong characters and enough cliffhanging to keep you hooked, and each scene looks, and sounds, fantastic. The characters' visage animations are good enough to inspire emotions in you other than the disbelief, horror, pity and hilarity at the mangled facial ticks of many a game arouse, and the motion capture is put to good use with the rest of the human form too. Body language can say more than any words, and Ryan's attitude to life comes across more strongly with one desultory throw of a paper plane than it could in the longest diatribe. Impressive.

TOCA 'BOUT A REVOLUTION

So, that's the story, long held up to be this game's revolutionary aspect. It wisely doesn't overwhelm the game, and neither is it merely glued on top as



GERMAN INVASION The DTM is like Toca, only faster. And madder.



THE GREATEST Don't underestimate the oldtimer.

a semi-irrelevance. Menu screens might not ordinarily be a good topic for conversation, but Codemasters has approached these with the whole concept in mind, blending the story with the underlying mechanics. So instead of the usual flat array of choices, the player finds Ryan in his fully three-dimensional office, lazing in front of his PC drinking coffee. Later on you'll see events played out in this office, strengthening the link with the racing and the characters. It's entertaining. Each object represents an option: the PC shows you your emailed offers of drives and one-off challenges; the door takes you to the anteroom where multiplayer drivers await; and the filing cabinet holds mundanities like memory card management and screen positioning, all in handwritten documents. It serves to keep you in the world of the race driver, but never lets form triumph over function. Leaving an option highlighted brings up a small help file, and it's easy to navigate everything.

Of course, all of this would be irrelevant if the core driving weren't up to scratch, but it is. In fact, it's more than that – it's fantastic. The handling is perhaps the perfect balance between arcade simplicity and complex realism, so massive drifts and desperate outbraking manoeuvres are easy to start but entertaining to finish... Go flying into a



turn too hot and you'll soon find it's possible to coax your car into an outrageous oversteering slide and scrape your way around anyway. Of course there's a finite limit to your corner speeds, and those gravel traps will seem almost magnetic to the careless driver, but the edge of the cars' abilities is broad enough for you to jazz with them a little. And that's a lot of what makes them fun.

Of course, the way to the fastest lap times is still to keep it all in line and take the highest speed through the middle of the corner, and you're simply

not going to run out of challenges in this respect. *V8 Supercars* is one of those rare games with feel, a feedback so instant you can almost sense the grip of the road. This has nothing to do with the Dual Shock's rumbles, and obviously there's no actual connection between you and the road. It's all down to the visuals



BORN SLIPPIY At over 130mph, slipstreaming plays a part.



MODEL LOOKS All the car models are very sexy. Now break them!

YEAH, WELL THIS ONE GOES TO ELEVEN



BIZARRELY, THE DIFFICULTY LEVEL IN TOCA RACE DRIVER GOES UP TO 110 PERCENT...

YES, IT'S TRUE. IN BOTH MULTIPLAYER AND SINGLE player Free Race mode, it's possible to ramp up the opposition to harder than hard. You can also scale the cars back to 50 percent of their abilities – or any value in between – should you perhaps be too 'tired and emotional' to cope. Four player, for the record, has no computer opposition, while two player offers up to four. If you're insane and want to make it even harder, there's always the Simulation mode handling cheat. This makes the game more like the very first super-sensitive title, although *why* you'd want to do that is beyond us. You'd have to be a masochist. It's not the only cheat either – expect codes for unlocking all the tracks, cars and general stupidity to appear as soon as the game is on the shelves. Lovely.



PHOTO FINISH Identical cars = incredibly tight racing.

/ BARRIER SLAPPING CAN BE SO VIOLENT IT'S ALMOST PAINFUL TO WATCH /



Championship Progression

View your championship status and the current track layout

TWIST Believe it or not, this is the car options screen.



GET IN THERE The over-bonnet view is more useable.

and sound – you'll not only know when it's sliding, but when it's about to slide and by how much. The road actually feels smoother when it's wet, which is bizarre when you think about it. Then the smoke starts to pour off the tyres and the revs spool up...

MY REAR END IS TIGHTLY GRIPPED

Happily the super-light back end characteristics of previous Tocas have completely evaporated, having got gradually better since the first spin-on-the-straight version. Even *World Touring Cars* retained a fearful ability to let cars loop out with a hind-quarter tap from an opponent, but now you can mix it with all reasonable confidence. In what could be a deadly development for the dwindling concept of the gentleman driver, piling into corners and clattering a pack of cars rewards players with some addictively impressive damage. The cascading flickers of glass and solid metallic thumps are a perfect aural accompaniment to the visual chaos as panels bend, doors flap open and closed, spoilers fly off, bumpers drag and bonnets come loose. And that's just when you manage to stay on the track. Totally overdoing it can result in some remarkably realistic impacts, as straying into the deep gravel has your car ploughing straight on, its steering buried and useless. What

impresses are the details – many traps aren't even flat, and launch your battered chariot several feet in the air at barely abated speed. There's none of the *Gran Turismo*-style disappointments once it reaches the Armco at an angle, either. The resulting redirection and barrier slapping can be so violent it's almost painful to watch. Impacts can even throw you back onto the track, smoking and inverted: we caused one of the biggest videogame pile ups ever in just this way, taking out half the field on a super-fast straight. It was almost worth losing the race to see it.

Almost. Because, although it was our car in the way, it wasn't strictly our fault it got there. Yes, PSW's unimpeachable driver was taken out in uncompromising style by an AI car, slammed into the barriers quite deliberately. Without doubt, *V8 Supercars*' fields of no fewer than 14 cars contain some of the most entertaining wheelmen yet. Too many games let their cars sit dumbly on the racing line, seemingly oblivious to how hard you hit them or how many times you pass them on the same corner. Here, the drivers couldn't be more different. If you line one up for an outbraking manoeuvre on the inside, chances are you'll find them moving over to the middle of the track to block you. If you still go for it and outbrake yourself, running wide, they'll turn back



00:00.00 BEST
8/8 LAP
00:35.94 SPLIT

TIME 00:35.55
POS 8/82

OH, AC The AC Cobra is furiously hard to acquire.



00:00.00 BEST
8/8 LAP

TIME 01:00.63
POS 6/18

FAIR COMMENT These particles are certainly dynamic.

/ THE EDGE OF THE CARS' ABILITIES IS BROAD ENOUGH FOR YOU TO JAZZ WITH THEM A LITTLE /

in and pass you again. And if you sit on the racing line in front, brake early and expect it to stay behind with just a nudge for your troubles, you're going to be disappointed. It'll swerve round you and pass.

We even had a car cross a whole track just to try to block us out, eventually pushing us right onto the grass on the other side. These are determined bastards. But because their machines are bounded by the same physics as yours, it's fun and challenging rather than annoying. They can't mess you up and drive off over the gravel at high speed any more than you can. Anything they can do to you, you can do to them.

ZEN-LIKE STATE OF BEING RUBBISH

There is, however, an advantage in trying to calm down and think your way to a faster lap time. Both brakes and throttle are fully analogue, and sensibly there's a tell tale – the horizontal line with the little red blob, underneath the tachometer – to reassure you that you're on full throttle. We're grateful the developer has avoided the hardest pressures in the first place, as several driving games have appeared with throttles heavier than the real cars', and it's not fun. Normal pressure gives full throttle, while a light touch modulates the power for those important getaways. Gentle caresses of the brakes are especially useful, as a full on stab causes instant lock-up and the start of Your Final Drift...

With 38 circuits to master, there are plenty – hundreds – of entertaining corners and complexes. And with 42 cars to race on them, all with distinct abilities (not to mention obvious variations due to rear, front or four wheel drive) there's simply hours and hours of entertainment here. Even ignoring the story-based mode, this game's a toy box for driving fans. And of course, despite the name, these aren't just V8 cars. The game sports all the 2001 cars and drivers from the UK, German, Italian and of course Australian championships. The rest of the drivers are



ARSE-IFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

IT'S THE LATEST CRAZE:
GRATUITOUS CHICKS!
AND THESE ARE THE MOST
DISTURBINGLY REAL SO FAR!

YOU'VE SEEN THEM STANDING IN THE WAY IN EA'S *F1 2001*, you've even seen moving score girls in *Mike Tyson Heavyweight Boxing*, but now *V8 Supercars* moves the science of shaking software buttocks that one step further on. These second generation backside have quite the most outrageous animations you've ever seen – like two marshmallows fighting in a shrinkwrapping warehouse. The girls' fixed grins might well remind you more of synchronised swimmers than thinking human beings, but they do add atmosphere, and that's what they're there for. Unfortunately it's an atmosphere of wrongness... like when Frankenstein created life. It's just a bit deviant, and in his case rather smelly, especially when the septicemia set in as the rest of the body rejected the right arm. It only goes to drive home the point: there's no substitute for real girls. Now, does anyone know any?



PHWOAR!!! Melons. Peaches. And other rude types of fruit.



BIG PS2's big memory allows realistically long straights. Go!

fictional (although the cars aren't, of course), as there are 13 championships that need filling. What's refreshing is that you don't have to win them all to progress, so you shouldn't get stuck. In addition, if you're struggling, the subsequent email offers have lesser demands attached, while ace drivers will find far more testing challenges awaiting them. It's a good way of tailoring the difficulty level without making you choose before you've even played it.

THE EIGHT MILLION DOLLAR QUESTION

Codemasters reckons there's around fifteen hours of entertainment in the main part of this game, although we think there's a lot more than that. Determined drivers also unlock a further Elite Championship by winning the World Championship, but it takes \$8 million just to enter – you'll need to go back and smoke some of those earlier championships in order to raise the cash. Only then can you race against 'Cannonball' Jack Johnson and become 'The Greatest', and this adds another eight to ten hours. Then there's multiplayer for up to four people, the customisable championships in Free Race mode, the replayability wrought by the sheer volume of tracks and cars coupled to the great handling and entertaining AI, the pro race



BOUNDER AND A CAD This is Nick Landers. He's English, you know.

drivers' cars to win... really, it need never end. It may not look quite as stunning as *GT3*, but by God it more than makes up for it with racing. Not just driving. Racing. Racing with crashes. Racing with excitement and adrenaline. Racing with believable, organic opponents. Racing, for God's sake! *F1* is supposed to be the pinnacle but it doesn't have any of this racing – tin tops are where it's at now. You won't be disappointed with this.

/ STEVEN WILLIAMS

VERDICT

PSW

UPPERS

- Tons of great cars
- Tons of great tracks
- Highly entertaining racing
- Many hours' entertainment

DOWNERS

- Occasionally unattractive
- graphically
- Tracks not totally precise
- Not much else bad...

GRAPHICS - Fast, detailed and smooth

9

SOUND - A fantastic array of howls

9

LIFESPAN - Potentially huge. Years of fun

9

OVERALL SCORE

Even if the story was rubbish, this would be a huge and vastly entertaining game. But it's not rubbish: snappy cut-scenes make this more involving. Bottom line – the racing's fantastic.

9



AFL LIVE 2003

THE SECOND AUSSIE-FLAVOURED SPORTS GAME THIS ISSUE FAILS TO DISAPPOINT.

TYPE	SPORTS
PLAYERS	1-4
OUT	NOW
DISTRIBUTOR	ACCLAIM
PRICE	\$99.95
DEVELOPER	IR GURUS
RATED	G

AFL LIVE 2003 IS THE FIRST AUSSIE Roolz game to hit the PS2, and it's the first to hit gaming land since EA Sports discontinued its series back in 1999.

Much has already been said about the game in previous issues of *PSW*, so let's get right to the point – does the return of tall lanky men in tighties to our TV screens hit us with a bang or with a whimper?

Well, neither really. To draw an analogy, *Live 2003* is less like a goal taken from just outside of the centre square and more like a dead sitter knocked in a few metres out from the uprights. Both will give you the six, however one scores a heck of a lot higher than the other when it comes to the spectacle.

Which is perfectly fine, as what *AFL Live 2003* lacks in game options, style and originality (does anyone remember the EA Sports version?) is made up for in the pure gameplay department. Indeed, IR Gurus of Melbourne has – with the aid of the deeply passionate ex-player, coach and AFL evangelist

Kevin Sheedy – poured a lot of heart and soul into the proceedings and what results is one hell of a play, especially with yer mates.

SPORTS GAME BY THE NUMBERS

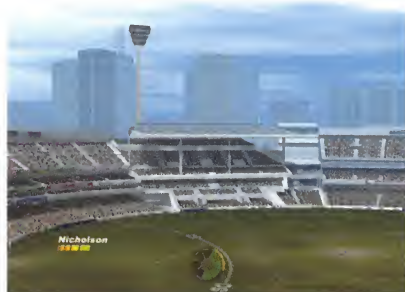
AFL Live 2003 is as much about the Australian Football League as it is about Aussie Roolz. As such, the game features all you'd expect of an officially licensed product. Take any one of the current 2002 season AFL teams (kitted out in the authentic and appropriate home or away jerseys) to six of the currently played-in stadia. Commentary is provided by AFL gabber (and sports reporter for *The Panel*) Steve Quartermain and ex-AFL player Garry Lyon, who both do the job adequately enough. The fans in the stadium even make the effort to support their team, appearing in the scheme of their home team colours. Cool or what? Even cooler is the inclusion of all the official club songs – an absolute must for a true-to-life

ambience of the experience.

The detail continues with the players themselves – each team features real AFL 2002 season player names. And reflecting their individual strengths and weaknesses, IR Gurus has added player statistics and has broken them down into six key areas: Skill, Tackle, Marking, Speed, Stamina and Health. All self-explanatory (with the possible exception of Skill – this represents ball kicking), these stats have a discernible effect on play, and if stats are enabled, their levels will deteriorate as the player fatigues throughout a game. True to form, most of these stats take a major dive if the player is injured.

PLAYTIME

So far, so good. Once you've decided what sort of game you'll play – a single, a season, or a finals series – and which team you'll play, you're off to the paddock for a bit of Aussie Roolz. This is where *AFL Live* shines. The mark of a good sports title is how well authenticity and play fluidity is balanced. Many a game has suffered where a weakly implemented strategy would be avoided or a strong one exploited. Not so in *Live 2003*: a long kicking game can garner some solid ground, however it seems that you will be intercepted more than you'll succeed finding your mark. A running game will move the ball upfield, however opponents will tackle you, so you'll have to kick. To get a respectable score on the board, you'll have to play the game like the real thing – exploit your team's strengths and weaknesses; know when to send the ball deep or to handball it to your nearest team-



LOVELY VIEW They've even modeled the Melbourne weather to perfectly!



UNDER LIGHTS And the Bulldogs were lucky to score zero.



ARSE CAM The sponsors will be happy with this screenshot.

LOVER'S TIFF That's what we call a balls and all tackle.



ONE-NIL. What is this, a game of soccer?



OPEN GOAL. He can't miss this one, surely? Actually, it is March playing, so maybe...

spectacularly placed long offerings, while others will be scuffed in just metres from the goal. Gameplay is rewarding and encourages repeat play, especially against friends. Fantastic stuff!

The other critical area in sports titles is the artificial intelligence (AI) of the computer-controlled players. Here, IR Gurus has produced a mixed bag. On the whole, player support is quite good – players will chase the opposition, steal the mark, and will be placed in strategic positions as play unfolds. On the down side, your team-mates all seem to suck at tackling, regardless of their stats. Many a time a player will register a visual collision but fail to make the tackle – a problem made especially frustrating when played on the hard difficulty setting.

BELLS AND WHISTLES

IR Gurus has certainly put a lot of work into the look and feel of the game itself, and the results speak for themselves. As mentioned, it's intuitive to play and holds up well at extended play sessions. Beyond this to the presentation of proceedings, however, and *AFL Live 2003*'s are limited. There are but three game modes – single, season and finals – with little else besides to take advantage of the medium. Case in point is EA's *Madden 2000* – which featured the Madden Challenge. Various features were unlocked as the player completed key game milestones during normal play – things such as completing a pass worth of 50 yards, or scoring a touch-down off an interception. The great thing about the mode

ON THE DOWNSIDE, ALL YOUR TEAM-MATES SEEM TO SUCK AT TACKLING/

was that gamers could access the checklist from the main menu and at least know which milestones they could aim for. No such modes – not even a practice or training mode – in *Live 2003*.

Rest assured that some of these complaints have already been addressed – there's already talk of a custom team option (including all the games greats, past and present) to be included in *AFL Live 2004*. But should we have to wait that long for such features – especially considering the twenty-year odd history of the genre?

AFL Live 2003 is respectable title. IR Gurus has developed a strong AFL simulation that is rewarding to play, but shirked us in the options department. Still, that's a heck of a lot better than getting it the other way around.

/March Stepnik

THE MARK

After you've kicked the ball deep, the game camera switches from the third person perspective of the kicker and fixes itself on the spot where the ball will land – facing the kicker. This gives enough time for your players – and your opposition's – to position themselves for the catch.

Of course, there'll usually be more than one contesting the ball, so this is where Aussie Rules' signature play – the mark – comes in. Time it right, and your player will climb the back of the nearest footballer for the catch.

While it may seem disorienting at first, it won't be long 'til you'll be the mark master. Up there, Kazale..! (cringe;)



VERDICT

PSW

UPPERS

- Nice animation
- Fun to play
- Real teams and stadium
- Controls easy to master

DOWNERS

- Lacks options
- Arbitrary commentary
- Crowd response a little flat
- No Bruce McAvaney

GRAPHICS - Solid animation, functional graphics

7

SOUND - Nice effects, however crowd is a little moody

6

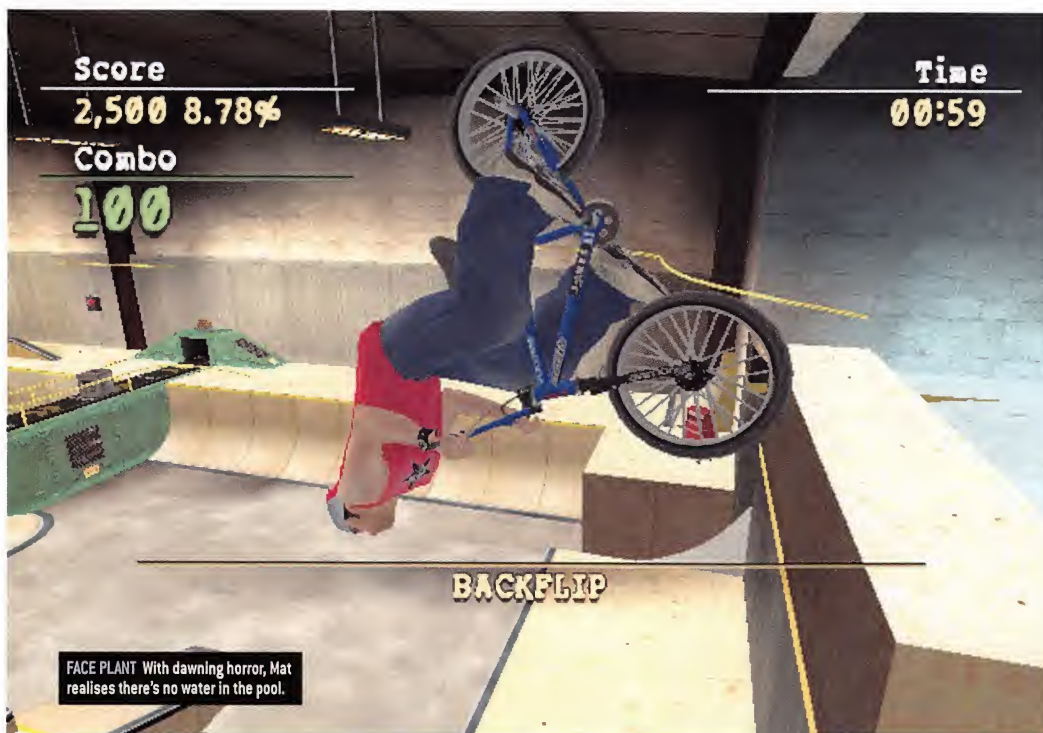
LIFESPAN - Easy to learn and perfect. Not much else though

6

OVERALL SCORE

Aussie Roolz hits the current generation consoles – rejoice! The game itself is a joy to play – but why do we have to wait for next year's update for more game options?

7



RAILGUN He's good on a rail, you see. (That's awful - Ed.)

MATT HOFFMAN'S PRO BMX 2

TERMINATOR 2: JUDGMENT DAY... ALIENS... SEE, THERE ARE SEQUELS THAT ARE BETTER.

TYPE	SPORTS
PLAYERS	1-2
OUT	NDW
DISTRIBUTOR	ACTIVISION
PRICE	\$99.95
DEVELOPER	RAINBOW
RATED	G8+

SURPRISE, SURPRISE – MAT
Hoffman's *Pro BMX 2* is a damn fine game and it kicks three shades of crap out of the original *Mat Hoffman*. A game engine customised to the unique traits of BMX, a bevy of special moves, expansive levels and some tasty personal touches mark this the BMX title to beat. It shares a great deal of style and execution with another Activision franchise, *Tony Hawk*, but manages to present a different enough world so that Hawk fans of old and newcomers will be satisfied.

Most striking is the feeling of a bike under the rider. The bike takes time to get moving and actually has mass, which means that when the rider soars off a ramp, they need to be pretty fast to get any height. If muscle memory is anything to go by, bike and rider gain significantly less air than their *THPS* counterparts. Most impressive though is that the twisting motion of the bike in the air can't be corrected easily. When completing 360s and the like, the bike continues to move

even when our man Hoffman is facing the right way. The motion feels good.

The Revert move that made *Tony Hawk 3* so notable has always been in *Mat Hoffman*. To link an air move to a manual, you simply need to time the landing right. Following your Candy Bar or Table Top, a manual is mandatory. A truly cool thing about BMX is that if a rider comes down fakie, they're backwards. This opens up whole other options for combos and the thrill of combining a fakie to a string of tricks is a new experience.

Mat Hoffman is supremely satisfying in the

combo stakes. The big points have to come from big combos and Rainbow Studios has just about nailed the difficulty-to-compulsion ratio. Balancing a grind or manual is tricky but is not so touchy as to be impossible, so stringing chains of tricks together is a little more exciting and a little less frustrating than it has been in other games.

The bike tends to settle into a slow-ish speed but not a crawl or a stop. There's enough to think about between balancing the manual, doing tricks and directing the bike without a quick tempo included. The pace of the game can be a good deal



SIDE SADDLE Mat's equipment gets in the way of a safe landing.



LOOK, MA, NO HANDS! Bloody show off. Luckily there's an ambulance on hand in case of tragedy.



slower and extended combos benefit for this. Mere mortals like yours truly can manage to loop a venue once or twice in creative ways without choking under the pressure.

Welcome to a veritable treasure trove of tricks to pull off – there's healthy double digits of air moves, the same again of street tricks. These include the Steamroller, Lung Spin, Whiplash; Indian Air, Superman and Backflips to name but a few. Quite apart from that most moves can be tweaked into another move altogether. Suffice to say, here's a palette with which to paint the arenas red.

The format of the game is a Road Trip across the USA. At the beginning, one city is available. As objectives are completed, other cities can be unlocked – and what truly stupid objectives they are. Collect five gas cans? Knock over toolboxes? It's also the familiar territory of the two-minute time limit. Now I'm no BMX expert (or skater for that matter) but they generally do their thing for longer than that. The fun is certainly the journey but sadly

the journey is a sprint from one end of the city to the other looking for five tokens. Or it's collecting five hotdogs. Or something. This is certainly the weakest part of these games, tying gamers to painful and seemingly pointless exercises in advancement with the watch hanging over their heads.

The arenas are nice and spacious from interiors to busy city streets... and not much else. The levels are big enough to provide hours of line hunting and there are countless ways through them. Big enough that if you're looking for something that you've seen before, you might get lost. There are eight levels but there are three tiers of objectives (four in each) to complete. If objectives are your thing, then bully for you.

The lack of vision in the objective-based play with time limits casts a dark shadow of the past on what should be an entirely new and unique game. Other quibbles? Well, it's amazingly linear, with each city accessible only by gaining a set number of points in the last. The soundtrack is patchy at best (Bomfunk MCs... WTF?), with maybe 10 tracks... some need to

/THERE'S HEALTHY DOUBLE DIGITS OF AIR MOVES AND STREET TRICKS/

be unlocked. But there's no doubt that the good outweighs the bad in *Mat Hoffman Pro BMX 2*.

A nice addition is that the movies that run before each new city aren't simply Planet X film clips, their little featurettes that introduce each of the riders. One sees Mat Hoffman and Tony Hawk together, doing some filming. Mat takes a nasty fall and decides to pack up and go home. There's personality and some connection to the guy through the video, which is refreshing.

Hoffman is the second string in the Activision 02 stable of Extreme Sports games and lives in the shadow of that tall rich guy, *Tony Hawk*, for the time being. *Mat Hoffman Pro BMX 2* is really what the original should have been: an accomplished, task-based thrill ride that may come to outshine the originator, Mr. Hawk. Regardless, as innovation slowly slips out of the Extreme Sports field, a brave game willing to mix up the formula will eclipse them all.

/John Dewhurst

FLATLAND IS WHERE IT'S AT

Flatland tricks offer huge flexibility in *Mat Hoffman 2*. While in a manual, tricks can be triggered with both the square and circle buttons with any direction of the stick. During a manual, the rider can be throwing the handlebars around, clambering up and down the bike or any number of other moves, before lining up a grind with which to continue the combo. It's nice that the speed of the bike only gradually decreases as you set about frantically pulling off moves on the flat. There's a safe zone of balance and speed where the big tricks can be pulled out, as long as the bike stays upright.



VERDICT

PSW

UPPERS	DOWNERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Variety and range of tricks Combo friendly physics Huge environments Loads of objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time limits Collecting shit, kill me! Very linear Mixed soundtrack
GRAPHICS - Functional, clear, fast	7
SOUND - Passable tracks that tire on repetition	6
LIFESPAN - Until the next one? Six months at least	8

OVERALL SCORE

A fine BMX trick game suffocated by the unlocking mentality. Someone, Cut the Extreme Sports World Loose!

8



DINO STALKER

FREEDOM, DINOSAURS, TIME TRAVEL, ROGUE COMPUTERS AND HOLOGRAMS COME TOGETHER IN CAPCOM'S SUPER STRANGE SHOOTER.

TYPE	SHOOTER
PLAYERS	1
OUT	NOW
DISTRIBUTOR	THQ
PRICE	\$99.95
DEVELOPER	CAPCOM
RATED	M15+

WE HEARD ABOUT DINO STALKER'S bizarre plot a while back, and even after a full two months of pondering, introspective chin-stroking and management meetings, we still consider its World War 2, dinosaurs, time travel and meteorites storyline to be positioned slightly on the wrong side of the stupid fence. But then we always skip through the cut-scenes anyway, so what does it really matter?

The foremost *Dino Stalker* fact you need to know is this – it's a laugh to play. You're pretty much set free to walk where you like (within a small set

area), investigating wooden crates, shooting dinosaurs and collecting weaponry and time bonuses. And... no, that's it. The gameplay is presented at a Fisher Price level of simplicity, requiring nothing more of the player than to look at – then shoot – some dinosaurs.

Throughout the whole experience there's a clock ticking away in the top-right corner of the screen. That's your Doomsday countdown – fail to neutralise the dino threat in time and humanity dies due to some extraordinarily complex (see panel) chain of paradoxical events. A harsh penalty we're sure you agree, albeit one that encourages you to keep playing at a heady pace and make good speed with the shooting.

LEARNING TO STALK

Weapon assistance is everywhere, with rocket launchers, shotguns, crossbows, grenades and suchlike popping out of rocks, crates and

even defeated enemies. If dinosaurs are intelligent enough to carry weaponry around with them, why don't they use the guns to defend themselves? No wonder they died out if they blindly hand over rocket launchers to the enemy. Particularly impressive is the lightning gun which, if properly aimed, sends a fork of electric death arcing between every dino currently on screen. It's a pleasant and thoroughly satisfying way to massacre the irritable critters.

Particularly unimpressive is the range of monsters you face. You're up against two standard, default ground-attack dinos, which come in easy green flavour (one shot to kill) and tougher red dinosaurs. With red being the international colour of danger, this is your visual clue that these ones take three or four shots to kill and should therefore be afforded a little more respect. There are a couple of aerial attackers, a couple of water-based leaping fish things, but not much else to get dino-fanciers excited.

The bosses are a bit lacking too. The pair of T-Rexes you face early on appear on another two separate occasions as you fight through the game, with some laughably bad water-based Loch Ness Monster things making a mockery of



DOWN THE SHOOT Parachuting to Earth, neutralising as you go.



PLOT SPOILERS!

DINO STALKER'S STORY EXPLAINED... AS WELL AS WE CAN



NO, THE YEAR "I'm not kissing you... you may be my mother".

THE YEAR 2009. A NEW ENERGY SOURCE

code-named the 'Third Energy' went wrong and somehow caused a dimensional time warp. Our timeline was devastated, as was the Cretaceous period of 65 million years ago. This damage would influence the creation of mankind, so action had to be taken. The 'Noah's Ark Plan' was set up to transport the dinosaurs of 65 million years ago to a place in the future where they could survive, then transport them back to the past once the damage had been repaired. But the project went wrong so the 'Mother Computer' took control of the scheme, but hit problems too and sent the dinosaurs into hyperspace. The Mother Computer then created a 'perfect' dinosaur called Trinity to save the project – you must fight Trinity in hyperspace to make everything OK. That's creative storylining for you; well done to Capcom!



TIME TO GO "If I leave now I can get back home yesterday."



WHERE'S NEW YORK? And what have you done with time?



ARE YOU A T-REX? "Right, I'm confused now. Who is this guy?"



THIS LITTLE PIGGY Use the feather duster weapon to tickle its feet. Nothing can resist that attack.



ZOOM ZOOM A sniper view is standard. All guns may use it.



NO, REALLY Pylons are there because this is set in hyperspace.

/ NO WONDER THEY DIED OUT IF THEY HANDED OVER ROCKET LAUNCHERS TO THE ENEMY/

the rubber dinghy ride. They poke their long neck out of the water, sway slightly, then bite your face off should you fail to shoot their thin necks a couple of times.

USING THE REX BUTTON

The joyypad control system is a little too complex to cope with a couple of the levels. The left stick controls your left/right/forwards/backwards movement perfectly, with the right stick moving your gun's target around the screen. For the most part you don't need to use this at all, as most dinos politely lumber across the centre of the screen at some stage as if looking forward to being shot. But on the rare levels that require you to look up and down as well (like level one's introductory parachute sequence) aiming and looking around is a tough old challenge to perform well with a standard controller.

That's why it's best to use a gun. You'll be needing a G-Con 2 to play *Dino Stalker* properly, with the light-manipulating add-on increasing enjoyment by a scientifically proven factor of ten. But it's never particularly tough. Don't put it on Easy mode, or you'll blast through it really quickly and regret it. We did that. And we regret it. Learn

from our mistakes, it's what we're here for. Even when hindered by joyypad control and playing on Normal difficulty you'll have made *Dino Stalker's* challenge extinct in an afternoon, but, for reasons we're not going to elaborate on (because we don't know why) it's the kind of game you'll be going back to for those perfect A grades, just because it's fun. And that storyline? We quite like it now.

/ GARY CUTLACK

VERDICT

PSW

UPPERS

- Great fun to play with a gun
- Time travel AND dinosaurs!
- Loads of different weapons
- Very easy to get into

DOWNERS

- Awkward joyypad controls
- Poor selection of dinos
- Looks a little basic
- No two-player option

GRAPHICS - A few pretty moments, but mostly sub-good

5

SOUND - A good bit of dino screeching, nice voices

7

LIFESPAN - It's short, but then it is a gun game

5

OVERALL SCORE

A positive 6, because it's a fun game. It doesn't look all that, it's quite short, but remains an atmospheric experience that makes great use of the gun. It's fun. And we like having fun.

6



"HANG ON, SCOOB!"
The actual voice of
Shaggy, in your PS2!



SCOOBY SNACKS A dog wearing comedy slippers! Pure genius.



HELPING HAND Daphne keeps up the boys' spirits on the road.



"WHO TURNED OUT THE LIGHTS?" The old ones are the old ones.

SCOOBY DOO: NIGHT OF 100 FRIGHTS

RUNNING, JUMPING AND COLLECTING SCOOBY SNACKS.
YES, IT'S A PLATFORM GAME. YES, IT'S THE SAME. YES, IT'S OK.

TYPE	PLATFORM
PLAYERS	1
OUT	NOW
DISTRIBUTOR	THQ
PRICE	\$99.95
DEVELOPER	HEAVY IRON STUDIOS
RATED	G
SEE IT ON DVD	
/ Scooby jumping / Scooby eating biscuits / Scooby being scared / Shaggy being Shaggy	

IT'S NOT BASED ON THE FILM, they've used the old trick of buying up the cheaper cartoon license to make the game from. Which is good – we get the original Scooby soundtrack, the original voices from the TV series and the classic look we all know and love and never really found that funny to begin with. You leap straight into a world where "strange goings on" a lot of "mysteries" and quite a few cases of "disappearing without a trace" have been noticed in and around the old haunted Mystic Manor. Why they decide to seek the help of some unemployed youths who drive about in a van instead of consulting the local authorities is unknown. Using the Mystery Machine and the Manor as a base camp, you then set about steering

a decent representation of Scooby Doo around an array of platforming levels that are very much heading into the ordinary.

It's different from all other platform games in one way – you collect Scooby Snacks instead of gold coins. Apart from that it's gap-leaping, rope-swinging, collapsing platforms all the way, in a game featuring a total number of new ideas you could count on the fingers of a fish. At the time of going to press we had yet to discover the mine cart level, although we are certain it exists somewhere in this inspiration-barren game.

But, as usual, we're just being needlessly harsh to look all cool and hard. There are enough nice little touches in *Scooby Doo* to be able to construct a reasonable enough case for it being a decent

game. On leaving the first area, Scoob bumps into Shaggy, who pops up often for plot and comedic interludes. Seeing Shaggy carrying a frightened Scoob around is guaranteed to raise a laugh. You can stick on the stealth slippers to sneak past sleepy enemies (or put a lampshade on your head – both events trigger canned laughter from the "audience"), there are shovels for digging up extra Scooby Snacks and bonus items, plus the voices are brilliant too. All of the dialogue is spoken, the guys all sound like they're supposed to and the effects are especially nice with the old "speedy bongo" sound effect for running on the spot giving us vivid flashbacks to Saturday morning, 1983.

It's smooth but not the shiniest or most colourful game, and were it put beside the sexier

BANNED!

GEEK-FAVE SARAH MICHELLE GELLAR WAS ALL SET to enjoy yet another girl-girl kiss in the Scooby motion picture. Sadly, Buffy's snog with Linda Cardellini's Velma was deemed "too saucy" to appear in a movie aimed at kids. Hopefully the deleted snog will feature on the DVD release – the kids need a few positive lesbian role models! For your information and our perverse sexual gratification we have created this artist's impression of how the kiss may have looked:

HOLLYWOOD BIGWIGS AXE LESBIAN KISS SCENE FROM KIDS' MOVIE





BLACK MAGIC Don't worry, it's all done with a slide projector, a tape recorder and mirrors.



CUT TO THE CHASE Set-pieces add some variety to the gameplay.



DON'T FANCY YOURS MUCH Velma's only there to make Daphne look even foxier.



WHAT NEXT? Those are platforms. This is a platform game. That's the jump button. You work it out.



"RAGGY?" Scooby's speech impediment is intact, although not quite as authentic as Shaggy's voice.

Jak & Daxters or Ratchet & Clanks of this world it'd be pointed at then laughed out of town. And sadly you can't direct the game's camera yourself, so should you need to retrace your steps you often end up walking towards the camera with no clue as to where you're going. "Zoinks!" as Shaggy would probably say if asked to play a game with such occasionally awkward controls.

UNREALISTICALLY REALISTIC RUBBER MASKS

Luckily though, you never die. Mess up and you're thrown back to the last point at which the game loaded in a level, which is usually only 30 seconds or so from where you came a cropper. There are plenty of save points about the place too, but they're only really of use for when you're done

/ A TOTAL NUMBER OF NEW IDEAS YOU COULD COUNT ON THE FINGERS OF A FISH /

playing and want to turn off the machine. Perhaps they're to help gamers who live in areas with frequently interrupted power supplies? Whatever – it's very easy, despite the odd awkward and annoying 3D jumping problem that'll require as many as two or three attempts to get through.

But then it is aimed at kids (presumably poor deprived kids whose parents won't let them play games with sniper rifles in). Gameplay is... must we really explain? Find keys to unlock doors, earn points to open warp gates, bounce on enemies' heads, discover new abilities to reach hitherto inaccessible areas – same as ever. But if you're six years old and experiencing it for the first time, no doubt you'd find it a lot less predictable, and dare we suggest, quite fun.

It's a nice game for nice youngsters. Much as we want to use the full weight of our embittered adult cynicism to mockingly tear it to shreds, we just can't. It's a sweet thing that's perfectly playable. It's a standard, developed-by-numbers platform game that will please anyone who still hasn't got bored by this kind of thing (no doubt the same people who currently watch the cartoon). But remember, it is aimed exclusively at those pesky kids. So adults beware – if you get stuck on it or even spotted playing it you'll look really stupid.

/ GARY CUTLACK

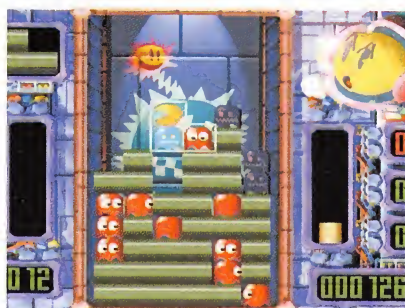


BEHIND YOU! Scary? Maybe, if you're aged six and three quarters.



WEB OF DECEIT "But why would he want to scare everyone off?"

VERDICT		PSW
UPPERS	DOWNERS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Great original Scooby design- Nice voices and effects- Lots of classic locations- Loads of easy levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Canned laughter?- Kid-level difficulty challenge- It was the mansion owner all along	
GRAPHICS	- Not great, but chunky and recognisable enough	6
SOUND	- Cool voices, spoiled only by a laughter track	7
LIFESPAN	- Well, it is aimed at kids. Easy, but quite big	5
OVERALL SCORE		6
If you haven't seen it all before a million times you might like it, but if you have you'll find it way too predictable. It's for the young, the young at heart, and the stupid of head.		



PAC ATTACK What a novel idea! Update an old gaming classic!

PILLS, KILLS AND HEADACHES Welcome to Pacistan.

ICE TO SEE YOU Please, don't make me caption more platform games.

PAC MAN WORLD 2

IT'S THE RETURN OF THE PAC, AS THE ICONIC YELLOW PILL MUNCHER REAPPEARS WITH A NEW SOLID LOOK.



TYPE	
PLATFORMER	
PLAYERS	
1-2	
OUT	
NOW	
DISTRIBUTOR	
SONY	
PRICE	
\$99.95	
DEVELOPER	
NAMCO	
RATED	
G	
SEE IT ON DVD	
/ Updated 3D Pac-Man remix / Eat pills, chase ghosts... / You know the drill by now / Please tell us you do...	

WE KNOW WHAT YOU'RE THINKING.

It's just another one of those lazy rehashes where they bolt a decrepit old gaming has-been onto a mediocre, generic platforming engine and hope we're all gullible nostalgic idiots, right? Well just this once you'd be wrong, big time, as were we.

The secret to Pac Man's successful re-entry into the world of gaming is Namco's ability to meld everything that we remember and love about the original classic with fresh new ideas and innovation. The entire design of the game constantly hints at the Pactser's mazy roots but in a cunningly subtle fashion.

Health replenishment is achieved by munching the long lines of pills strewn across each area. Ghosts are still your meddling adversaries and special pills can still be found to send them scurrying off in the opposite direction before you get hold of them. However, it's no longer just a matter of clearing one maze before moving onto

the next identical level. Just like most other quality platformers it's all about working your way through each area with a combination of joystick dexterity, well-timed leaping and a judicious amount of exploration for - you've guessed it - coins and fruit.

Weeding out every craftily hidden coin is considerably more rewarding than your usual 'reach the magic 100' goal. This time you get to unlock some of Pac Man's classic games of yesteryear. Surprisingly they've aged pretty well with the original *Pac Man* still providing a stern challenge and possessing that unique ability to entice you back again and again. It's a clever use of the *Pac Man* heritage and one which keeps you playing long after you've finished the main single player quest.

So, the main quest then. The 18 levels in *Pac Man World 2* are crammed full of platforming clichés and staples, but everything is achieved with an accomplished sheen of class and subtle invention. Forest levels, swimming underwater, bottom bouncing, and regular boss battles are all resurrected from the dusty tomb marked Mario, Sonic, Crash and friends. But when it's all injected with such charm and quirky style you can't help but get sucked in and thoroughly enjoy the harmless distraction of it all.

Initial generic leaping from platform to platform gives way to launching yourself off bounce pads through a forest and then turns into in-line skating before letting you loose in a submarine loaded up with missiles. Throughout you'll discover numerous references to Pac Man's past with novelty ghost chases, mini mazes, and even a selection of bonus games that give the original 2D *Pac Man* game a lick of PS2 colour and style. The draw of the old

maze games is short-lived, but still evident.

The only major disappointment with *Pac Man World 2* is that it's all over so quickly. The game never rises above mildly challenging, which is good for the life of your joystick, but doesn't help the pretty short lifespan of the main adventure. The retro games and the modern maze updates help to provide some replayability, but overall the entire game could probably fit into a couple of *Jak & Daxter*'s levels.

Namco has done an impressive job of capturing the spirit of the original, incorporating numerous traditional *Pac Man* features within an impressively modern 3D world. It's unable to match the remarkable imagination and levels of brilliance that games like *Jak & Daxter* and *Maximo* exude but it's still a very worthy addition to the PS2's growing band of quality platforming titles.

/ MIKEY FOLEY



GHOST TOWN Pacman gets caught up in the deadly eccy-demic.

VERDICT

PSW

UPPERS

- Bonus retro classics
- Traditional concepts
- Heaps of replayability
- Clever ideas and variations

DOWNERS

- A little brief
- Some dodgy camera angles
- Progression is very linear
- Bored of *Pac Man* yet?

GRAPHICS - Cute and colourful. Just how they should be

7

SOUND - Nice use of the old traditional sound effects

6

LIFESPAN - Ignoring the bonuses it's all over too quickly

5

OVERALL SCORE

At last, a retro revisit that isn't just cashing in on nostalgic popularity. It's not as good as *Jak & Daxter* but definitely a class act, and one that will find more fans in younger gamers.

6



WIZARDRY

EVER WONDERED WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF THE JAPANESE MADE A WESTERN RPG? NOW YOU KNOW...

TYPE	RPG
PLAYERS	1
OUT	NOW
DISTRIBUTOR	UBISOFT
PRICE	\$99.95
DEVELOPER	ATLUS
RATED	M15+

WIZARDRY IS A STRANGE CROSS- cultural mish-mash. Japanese developer Atlus has ploughed the fertile fields of western roleplaying games

only to plant it with the seeds of eastern RPG tradition. The resulting mutant harvest is one of the most schizophrenic games we've ever encountered. *Wizardry* combines old-school dungeon hacking reminiscent of the bad old days of American PC nerd gaming with a penchant for the kind of melodramatic characterization the Japanese have spent years perfecting. It would succeed, too, were it not tied down by a clunking game engine that's nothing more than an anachronism on PS2.

Once you've assigned various arcane statistics and attributes to your new persona, the game proper commences in a bleak, blizzard-hit village. As per RPG convention #3047, you may visit a tavern to recruit willing adventurers, a temple to heal, and a shop to procure weapons and armour before embarking on the obligatory trek to the nearest dungeon. Unusually for a game not released in 1986, each scene is portrayed with static illustrations while all the action (which mainly involves talking to

people) unfolds via the scintillating spectacle of the printed word. There's no voice-over, no animations, just oodles of text and character portraits enigmatically fading in and out of view. It's a decidedly strange experience, far more relaxed and contemplative than you would normally associate with a videogame. Some may find it, well... boring.

The tempo picks up from somnambulist to plodding when you arrive at the dungeon to partake on your quest. Here you're presented with a first-person perspective on a fairly primitive realtime 3D world. Imagine you're on a grid where you can move north, south, east or west and you've got an idea of how *Wizardry* plays.

Numerous creatures roam the grid-like halls of dungeon and combat is initiated when your party runs into them. Each battle is played out in turns not drastically unlike the *Final Fantasy* series. The key difference arrives in the application of Allied Actions where two or more of your characters cooperate to pull off a special move. Judicious use of these actions promotes a satisfying layer of strategy atop the already complex tactical nuances of the combat engine.

Further, the Allied Actions highlight the game's sole unique feature: Trust. To entreat your party to cooperate in the first place, you have to generate a certain level of trust amongst them. Valiant leadership or behaving to suit the party's collective moral code inspires greater trust and a willingness to obey your



BUXOM ELVES She could be a useful addition to the party.



ARMAGEDDON It doesn't look good for our heroes right now.



HELLO HALO I know, let's torch the place and run...

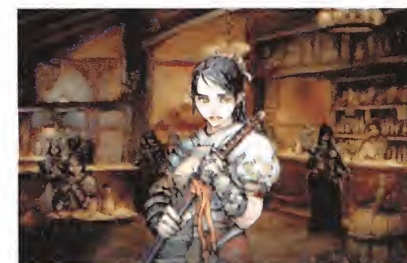


NICE STATS Alright, you caught us using the cheats. Damn!

commands. Every adventurer who joins your party is on a quest for spiritual redemption, and it's up to you to guide them towards the light. This is the abovementioned melodrama; it's cheesy and trite, but still adds emotional depth to people who would otherwise be a mere walking set of ability scores.

Wizardry isn't for everyone, that's for sure. It's a gentle, thoughtful throwback to a now-forgotten era of gaming. Squint past the drab aesthetics and you'll find a moderately compelling tale of adventure.

/David Wildgoose



AIN'T SHE SWEET Allow me to show you the meaning of love...

VERDICT

PSW

UPPERS

- Deep tactical combat
- Allied Actions are a winner
- Neat character interaction
- It's almost like a novel

DOWNERS

- Horribly ugly graphics
- Dated game mechanics
- Gets a mite repetitive
- It's almost like a novel

GRAPHICS - The stills are nice, but the rest is damn ugly

3

SOUND - Hilarious voice acting manages to charm

5

LIFESPAN - A lengthy quest with moderate replay value

7

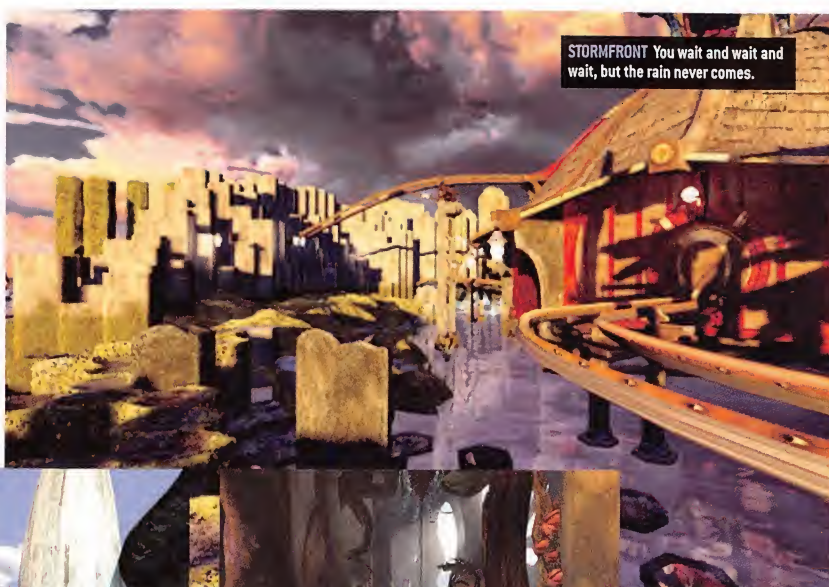
OVERALL SCORE

Despite the archaic graphics and abundance of text, the unique features add enough to sustain your interest. There's a neat little story in here, too.

6



A HEX ON YOU What's this? Aquatic dwelling giant bees?



STORMFRONT You wait and wait and wait, but the rain never comes.



A BRIDGE TOO FAR There's a logic puzzle round here somewhere.



IT ROCKS Oh, how we'd love a cutesy fishing mini-game.



ORGANIC This is what happens when fungi attack.

MYST III: EXILE

DEAR DIARY, WHY DO I HAVE TO READ SOMEONE ELSE'S DIARY IN A PUZZLE GAME?

TYPE	PUZZLE
PLAYERS	1
OUT	NOW
DISTRIBUTOR	UBI-SOFT
PRICE	\$99.95
DEVELOPER	PRESTO STUDIOS
RATED	G8+



THE TWO WORLDS OF MYST

and PlayStation seem so distant as to be separated by stargates.

PlayStation: the world of stylish

Japanese culture, stylish sports culture, stylish youth culture. *Myst*: the world of logic puzzles, lengthy diary entries, otherworldly beauty. Combining the two seems a little like playing chess on the dance floor.

Nevertheless, original developers Cyan bridged the gap - *Myst* and *Riven* both appeared on the PSone. Cyan are no longer developing *Myst* titles, due largely to the fact that creator brothers Rand and Robin Miller are now rolling in clods of cash from the sales of the first two titles. *Myst III: Exile* was licensed by UbiSoft, who recruited Presto Studios to do the honours.

You'd barely notice the change of management, as Presto has recreated the *Myst* experience like it was a recipe: aesthetically pleasing, deserted environments - check; mesmeric, world music

soundtrack - check; puzzles that require considerable patience - check; other puzzles that make your head hurt - check; and of course, diaries, diaries and more diaries to read. Check and check. It's all here.

This is an entirely artificial world, created for the sole purpose of housing these puzzles. No health bars, no time constraints, no enemies chasing you about the place. The only compulsion to do anything in the game is the desire to progress. There is an otherworldly lack of time in *Myst III*. The puzzles are quaint exercises in logic: puzzling out the combination to a door, the perfect alignment of a geometric shape, using an element of the world in a certain way. The experience of *Myst* is of one mind against a string of discrete conundrums. It works on its own terms - a chance for puzzle solving with creative thought.

There are two problems with *Myst III: Exile*. It fails to accomplish what the original did - present a graphically stunning world powered

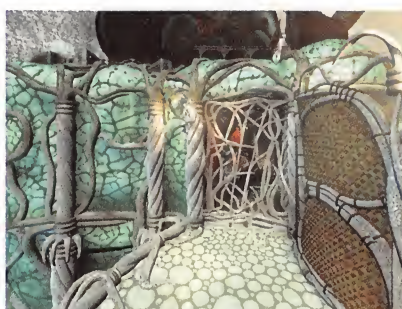
by the latest technology. The world of *Myst III* is beautiful but amazingly dated. Consider the 3D worlds we play in today and imagine being teleported a few steps forward every time you want to move somewhere. Discouraging. Secondly, Presto has done nothing to remedy the laborious task of finding and reading endless diaries that house shreds of clues. Why? *WHY?* Why must I read this endless book that is amazingly boring? There are other ways to present a story and explain characters. I know, I played the games that did.

Myst III: Exile is a classic sequel. It recycles the classic, warts and all, not daring to add anything new or exciting. As a thoughtful, walking pace puzzle game, it is the best around. As a new game in 2002, it is something less.

/JOHN DEWHURST



ELEMENTARY I can't solve the puzzle, the coin slot's broken.



THE VINES There is no Aussie punk rock on the soundtrack.

VERDICT

PSW

UPPERS

- Nice aesthetic
- Challenging puzzles
- Leisurely pace
- Making of... feature included

DOWNERS

- Dated engine
- Diaries galore
- Sequel by numbers
- A bit boring

GRAPHICS - Nice style, no balls

6

SOUND - Pan flutes and whale songs

7

LIFESPAN - Possibly years

8

OVERALL SCORE

Relaxed, thoughtful game with a refined formula... from eight years ago. More *Myst* the way the fans like it - but the question remains, do the converted own a PS2?

7



IT'S BALLOON TIME Gotta pop them all before the time runs out.



TANTRUM AVOIDANCE Tight line calls are shown in slo-mo replays.



PURPLE POWER Different courts don't affect things dramatically.

REVIEW

SLAM TENNIS



IT'S BALLOON TIME Gotta pop them all before the time runs out.



TANTRUM AVOIDANCE Tight line calls are shown in slo-mo replays.



SLAM TENNIS

HAVE WE FINALLY GOT THE PS2 ANSWER TO SEGA'S SUBLIME VIRTUA TENNIS?

TYPE	TENNIS
PLAYERS	1-4
OUT	AUGUST
PUBLISHER	INFOGRADES
PRICE	\$99.95
DEVELOPER	INFOGRADES
AGE	3+

THE MINUTE WE SLIPPED THE slender *Slam Tennis* disc into our PS2, fellow PSW *Smash Court* players were casting furtive glances towards this new challenger. So easy to get familiar with and so difficult to leave alone, it was immediately apparent that we had a new object for our affections. Maybe even something to finally stop us harping on about *Virtua Tennis* on Dreamcast, until now the absolute pinnacle of videogame racket thwackery.

Like both *Virtua* and *Smash Court*, *Slam Tennis* uses a wallop button and the obligatory lob, and that's it. There isn't a more pick-up-and-playable type of game on PS2, and it makes for some terrific two and four-player fun. But more of that later. The beauty of *Slam Tennis* is the hidden depth and subtlety of control beneath its simplistic façade.

BLAME IT ON THE BASELINE

Depending on where you're positioned on the court, your player will twat the fuzzy yellow ball in a particular fashion. Return from the back of the court and he or she will have time for a powerful ground stroke, but get too close to the net and all they're capable of is a straightforward defensive block. Of course this also depends on your player's ability. Tim Henman will be lethal at the net whereas Kafelnikov is more effective when glued to the baseline.



ON A PLATE The ladies have less power but they're nimble movers.

Every facet of *Slam Tennis* is geared towards having as much fun as possible. When players dive for the ball they perform lightning quick recoveries that sprawling Brazilian footballers would be proud of. They're straight back on their feet to receive the next return. Serving, on the other hand, has been raised to an art form. Aces are hard enough to be incredibly satisfying when you get it right, but easy enough to achieve without needing to corner Goran Ivanisevic for some tips.

The more you play and experiment, the more you'll discover about the little nuances that can mean the difference between a tie break defeat and a Grand Slam success. This extends to every single competitor in the game. Each one has a unique style, so it can take quite a few humiliating defeats for you to uncover the chinks in their game. As the opponents get harder and more cunning, matches become incredibly strategic. And if that fails there's always the powered special to throw a bit of a spanner in the works just when your opponent is least expecting it.

MAKING A RACQUET

Every player has a power bar that gradually fills with every impressive shot you attempt. When it starts flashing you can unleash a special shot (signified by the ball turning into a glowing sphere) that rockets across the court faster than a Sampras slam, or drop

like a stone over then net. They're not unreturnable but it takes tremendous anticipation to reach them in time. It's an added ingredient that makes multi-player *Slam Tennis* one of the best multi-player PS2 experiences. With a multi-tap, the combination of inter-team banter, bitching and competitive goading makes for some great group moments.

Slam Tennis is the only tennis game on PS2 that could take Sega's classic *Virtua Tennis* to a fifth and deciding set. Ultimately it loses out because of a slightly inferior single player challenge and less polished visuals. Even so, it's by far the most fun you'll have with girls in short skirts on PS2.

/ MIKEY FOLEY



GOT THE BLUES Nice colour change, green does get boring.

/ SERVING HAS BEEN RAISED TO AN ART FORM – ACES ARE INCREDIBLY SATISFYING/

VERDICT		PSW
UPPERS	DOWNERS	
- Variety of playing styles	- Small number of real pros	
- Fantastic multi-player fun	- Unspectacular characters	
- Imaginative street courts	- No Kournikova or Hingis	
- Novelty bonus games	- Sometimes unfairly hard AI	
GRAPHICS	- Not spectacular but nicely animated	7
SOUND	- Authentic thwops and cheers, lifeless umpires	7
LIFESPAN	- Good in single player, best in multiplayer	9
OVERALL SCORE		
Not quite as good as <i>Virtua Tennis</i> but easily the best racket-based entertainment on PS2. Shame about the lack of big name characters, but there's plenty of multiplayer life in it.		8



WHEN MISSILES GO BANG Use bombs from a distance. Or get closer to make screenshots look better.



ROAD TO NOWHERE Scenery isn't the game's best point.

FIREBLADE

F-16s ARE COOL, BUT THEY CAN'T HIDE BEHIND HILLS.

TYPE	ACTION
PLAYERS	1
OUT	NOW
DISTRIBUTOR	ACCLAIM
PRICE	\$99.95
DEVELOPER	KUJU ENT.
RATED	M15+

IF ONLY THIS HAD BEEN ABOUT bikes – the Fireblade is, most famously, Honda's era-defining 900cc superbike. The name comes from a literal translation of the Japanese for lightning, and used on that bike it's apt. But this is about helicopters. And does the name fit? Not really. Wonder what the literal translation of the Japanese for 'blustery showers' is?

You get two helicopters, in fact, and neither of them is called a Fireblade. That's the madness of war for you. Your main weapon is the Vendetta, a light (relatively) manoeuvrable gunship, while your heavier backup is the Talon. Interestingly, the Talon



AND ANOTHER! An explosion, yesterday. Well, about a month ago.



PURPLE BEACON That's it, glow up in the night sky, then attack! They'll never see you coming!

has the ability to become almost transparent in stealth mode, although frustratingly, troops still seem able to see it from bloody miles away. A see-through helicopter crouched behind a tree should be hard to spot, we say. Stealth missions are only occasional tests between the more general blasting missions, it's true, but they do cause something of a hiatus – your chopper can only creep with interminable slowness while cloaked. The EMP cannon helps, at least, by letting you disable enemies with an electric pulse instead of blowing them up and giving away your position. Their comrades don't seem to notice that they've stopped moving and started fizzing.

The bulk of it is proper face-to-face killing, however, and a lot more fun. Enemy jeeps, tanks and infantry all scurry about the large, hilly landscapes with impressive verve – blow up a watchtower and the surrounding vehicles immediately escape to warn the next lot – and everything can be smashed. Even the trees and the wildlife can be blown up and burnt down...

Exploded enemies frequently render useful pickups such as stealth and fresh rockets, which should tell you this is a pretty arcadey experience. The helicopters' handling fits the bill here too, although neither is particularly satisfying to fly. Mostly it's the fault of the camera, which can even lose your bird completely should you get too close to a mountain (those hilly landscapes often serve to cramp you onto a set path), and targeting seems to depend as much on altering your altitude as the aircraft's attitude. But the restricted nature



SCOPE-VISION Don't confuse it with the cigarette lighter button.



GET OUT, CLAUSS! Mission Control offers an excuse to finish early.

of some levels is unobtrusive in the main, leaving the game with an impressive feeling of space. The stodgy flight model dampens the excitement somewhat, however.

Although there are some entertaining touches, there are many annoyances – tedious stealth missions, enforced autopilot journeys if you stray too far, leaden manoeuvring weighing down the firefights – and few moments of wonder. Yes, you can shoot the legs off the tiny men, but only the most churlish would pay \$100 just for that. The real deal here is some solid navigating through some occasionally flaky missions, and if you're a fan of these things, you'll be able to extract some fun. For everyone else, *Dropship* is a far better bet. / STEVEN WILLIAMS

VERDICT

PSW

UPPERS

- Kill almost everything
- Lots of moving targets
- Fly invisible choppers
- Amusing guided missiles

DOWNERS

- No Fireblades in it
- Solid but uninspired control
- Stealth missions are dire
- Not as sexy as real 'copters

GRAPHICS - Smooth and reasonably detailed

6

SOUND - Choppers chop, speakers speak. Unremarkable

5

LIFESPAN - Stealth missions could stop you cold

6

OVERALL SCORE

It's not in a particularly overcrowded genre – Eidos's *Thunderhawk* and Sony's *Dropship* pretty much cover it – but still it doesn't really stand out. This is for real chopper fans only.

5



END GAME

THE BEST FORM OF DEFENCE IS ATTACK, AS HOUNDED FUTURE BABE JADE FIGHTS FOR HER RIGHT TO LIVE.

TYPE	SHOOTER
PLAYERS	1
OUT	NOW
DISTRIBUTOR	VIVENDI
PRICE	\$99.95
DEVELOPER	CUNNING
RATED	M15+
SEE IT ON DVD	
/ Hideously deformed faces / Enemies caving in / The London Underground / Some... er... shooting	

OOH! AN EXCITING VIRTUAL REALITY

cyber-thriller! How very 1994. The box has got a woman holding a gun on it and those blurry scan-line effects all over the place, there's a character called Tyler, there's an AI-gone-wrong sub-plot and a feisty female lead character who's at her most content when shooting men in suits and uncovering shadowy corporate conspiracies. Yep, *End Game* contains all of the elements that make today's video games so lifeless, dull, predictable and bland.

End Game plays identically to the critically loved-up *Time Crisis* series, positioning you safely behind desks, walls and chairs, and requiring the press of a button to leap out and start the murder. Plus, when you duck, Jade automatically reloads her shooter, avoiding the usual need to continually point away from the screen to fill up with slugs. It's a handy time-saving feature, especially with your playing speed taking on a great importance. The game is played with a very strict time limit governing your actions – let those guards hide behind their shields too often and you'll quickly get a game over. So hustle, it's about speed as well as accuracy.



Elsewhere it's a game that varies hugely in difficulty. The default enemies are disappointingly weak, all disappearing after one shot to the head, body, leg or foot. The guys all act stupid too, with endless hordes of cops simply popping their heads up or stepping out of doorways and waiting to be shot. The leaping, jumping, spinning and moving enemies that make other gun-games like *Vampire Night* or *Ninja Assault* much more enjoyable are nowhere to be seen. It's slow-paced, standard man shooting all the way here. Frankly, it's kinda dull. Toughness and slight eyebrow-raising levels of excitement are added by boss encounters which have madmen chasing you through large sections of the game, which require constant avoidance and counter hits to neutralise. So you fly through the levels taking no hits at all, then encounter a chain-gunning boss who destroys you. It's an odd feeling. Not bad, just peculiar in the way it drastically veers between difficulties.

On the plus side it's possible to blast pretty much all of the scenery, but once you've shot one bowl of fruit you've shot them all. TV monitor screens smash and crackle like we've seen so many times before, windows disintegrate into shards, enemies pop up right in front of your face to hit you with a quick stabbing attack. It's not just a little bit derivative, it's downright copying things we've all seen several hundred times before.

But is it fun? It's not new or exciting, but underneath the rough and unpolished surface lies



SHOOTING PAINS He exposed his shins. Now he will die. Amateur.



FRUIT 'N' FIRER Yes, you can shoot the bowl of fruit (yawn).



BLING DYNASTY Yes, you can shoot the vases (yawn).



STOP BREATHING AT ME The Underground killing spree we dream of.

a quite enjoyable gun game, albeit one that's neither big nor innovative enough to be worth throwing down this magazine and rushing out to buy immediately. A leisurely stroll shopwards, perhaps, but even then there'd be no hurry to get home and play it. If you've played any gun games before you should be able to perfectly *imagine* what *End Game* is like, therefore avoiding the inconvenience of buying it to see for yourself.

/ GARY CUTLACK



18-PINTER She's the ugliest woman in the history of video games!

VERDICT

PSW

UPPERS

- Some nice-looking levels
- Joe Jupiter mini-game
- Plays just like *Time Crisis*
- Uses the gun. We like guns

DOWNERS

- Some bad-looking levels
- Lumpy and ugly characters
- Not particularly tough
- Pointless "cyber thriller" plot

GRAPHICS - OK levels, but poor characters and enemies

5

SOUND - Yes, it has sound

5

LIFESPAN - Some easy bits and some hard bits – all short

5

OVERALL SCORE

Easy to get into, but so short, simple and bland you'll soon be straight back out of it again. It's not bad, it just fails to offer anything new or particularly sexy. A production line game. Next!

5

RAYMAN REVOLUTION

HE SPINS AROUND, SO IT MUST BE A REVOLUTION.

TYPE	PLATFORMER
PLAYERS	1
OUT	NOW
DISTRIBUTOR	UBISOFT
PRICE	\$49.95
DEVELOPER	UBISOFT
RATED	G

RAYMAN CREATOR MICHEL ANCEL made a grave error when designing his detachable limbed platform hero. How do you make a Rayman stuffed toy when his head, hands and feet are only connected to his torso by the smoke and mirrors of computer graphics? As a result, all Ubisoft's promotional toys feature Rayman clinging to something because otherwise he would simply fall apart.

It's an apt metaphor for describing Rayman's status in the league of videogame characters, too. Ever since his 2D debut on PSone, the digitally enhanced *[That's a terrible pun – Ed]* hero has forged a living through clinging to traditional platform game formulae. How can he stand on his

own when he relies so heavily upon convention?

The revolution of the title is misleading. This is generic platform gaming par excellence. *Rayman Revolution* sees the titular hero traversing ground so worn you can see your toes poking through it. Which is not to say it can't be entertaining. Collecting coins (or lum-lums, as the case may be) by jumping, helicoptering (thanks to Rayman's rotor-hair) and pummeling enemies (with his detachable



fist) still manages to suck you in – it's the "gotta catch 'em all" element once more, and it works, despite your cynical protestations.

It's no *Jak & Daxter* in terms of the visual opulence on display or the sheer variety of tasks involved. Indeed, *Rayman Revolution* is more than a little rough around the edges and looks every bit a first generation PS2 title. However, it makes up for it by delivering charm by the cartload and offering a gentle, unforgiving experience that is undoubtedly suited to the younger player.

Overall, it's hardly the pinnacle of PS2 platforming, but it will pass the time nicely before *Ratchet & Clank* and *Sly Cooper* arrive this Christmas.

/DAVID WILDGOOSE

PSW VERDICT 6

MIDNIGHT CLUB

FROM THE MAKERS OF GTA3. IT MUST BE GOOD...

TYPE	RACING
PLAYERS	1-2
OUT	NOW
DISTRIBUTOR	TAKE 2
PRICE	\$49.95
DEVELOPER	ANGEL STUDIOS
RATED	M15+

HOW DID ROCKSTAR GO FROM THIS to *Grand Theft Auto 3* in the space of twelve months? The answer is, of course, they didn't. *GTA3* was developed by Scottish studio DMA Design, now known as Rockstar North, while the motley crew responsible for *Midnight Club* was none other than Angel Studios. Despite both being published by Rockstar, the two games have nothing at all to do with each other.

Expectations thus suitably lowered, it's still astounding just how bad *Midnight Club* actually is. No, scratch that, this isn't bad, it's truly awful. Take *GTA3*, then subtract everything about it except for the checkpoint races (like El Burro's Turismo mission) and you have *Midnight Club*'s basic structure. Then alter the driving physics so that even the worst car can take a 90 degree corner at 100mph with just the gentlest touch of the

handbrake and you have *Midnight Club*'s basic feel. Then ensure that success is simply due to having the right car rather than any driver skill and you have *Midnight Club*'s basic flaw.

I repeat, it's truly awful.

/DAVID WILDGOOSE

PSW VERDICT 2



SMUGGLER'S RUN

DRUGS ARE REALLY BAD.

TYPE	RACING
PLAYERS	2
OUT	NOW
DISTRIBUTOR	TAKE 2
PRICE	\$49.95
DEVELOPER	ROCKSTAR
RATED	TBA

BEEN HAVING SMOKEY AND THE BANDIT delusions? Maybe you've been catching Dukes of Hazzard on cable? *Smuggler's Run* could be just the thing for you to catch up on some of those thrills and spills.

The size of the maps, the handling and great physics are the real strengths of the game. Although there are only three maps they're each a massive 24 square kilometres. You can drive to (or in to) any point you can see — off cliffs, through rivers, over bridges, through traffic signs and into towns. The single-player rush comes in the form of tight time limits and 5-0 who'd have been banned from the Blues Brothers for their abuse of force. There is something special about trying to ditch five cop cars, while skidding sideways, your car about to fall into component pieces, all with eight seconds left to make your pick-up. Yeah, it's a lot of fun, but for the complete bad-boy driver experience, you'll need a different ride.

Although you'll nail your objectives in a series of

high-risk smuggling missions and amass foolish amounts of dough, you'll never get to trick out your wheels. Sure, you get a choice of new vehicles as you progress but there's no feeling on continuity between missions. On top of that, there just aren't that many surprises — although the driving is a rush — you do get to know the maps and tagging way-points drags in extended sessions. The two-player races and competitive modes are fun but a pure demolition derby mode would have been nice.

If you want a campaign game to suck you in go and buy *Grand Theft Auto 3*, sure it'll cost twice as much, but that's what you're looking for. For some quick "whack in and play" thrills then go budget *Smuggler's* all the way.

/TIMOTHY C. BEST

PSW VERDICT 7



CRASH BANDICOOT: WRATH OF CORTEX

YOU KNOW... FOR KIDS.

TYPE	PLATFORMER
PLAYERS	1
OUT	NOW
DISTRIBUTOR	VIVENDI
PRICE	\$49.95
DEVELOPER	TRAVELLERSTALES
RATED	G

THIS TIME THE BANDICOOT IS TAKING on the nasty Dr. Cortex, a floating tribal mask and some familiar faces. Crash runs and jumps through levels in the way his fans have come to expect. The graphics are big and bright and there are plenty of levels. We've got jeep driving, power-frame walking, mine-car scooting and zippy-flyer piloting to break things up.

Kids won't be disappointed; on the other hand, they won't be amazed either. Although there are mini-games, pretty maps and kids will like it, it

doesn't do anything new or bring the sparkling design that can elevate games like *Spyro*, *Jax & Daxter* or *Maximo* to greatness. Beyond that, if you are really going to enjoy this you should probably have a hankering for load screens. They seem to be the real Wrath of Cortex.

If you liked the previous *Crash* games you'll like this... but for budget-conscious gamers *Rayman Revolution* is a better option.

/TIMOTHY C. BEST

PSW VERDICT 5



SOLUTIONS

ALL THAT NASTY EFFORT BANISHED FOREVER – FINISH GAMES YOU DON'T EVEN UNDERSTAND IN A THRICE!

OUR SURVEY SAID...

ASPARAGUS CAME NINTH, WHICH IS TO be expected in an internet poll of people's favourite types of tips. A surprise entry in the chart was the number seven showing of toes. Well, we've all got our little foibles, and who are we to judge those who covet the foot-finger? Something we never include in *PSW*, rubbish tips, ranked a respectable fourth – perhaps accounted for by the notoriously high number of refuse collectors that research has shown are inexplicably drawn to online surveys. Do you know what was number one? No, not Mini Kiev, Mini Cheddars, or even Mini Babybell – this was a poll regarding tips, remember! Yes, that's right, Mini Tips came out as the nation's favourite. And if you agree with the cyber-polsters, you've come to the right place. I have to go now, but you can stay as long as you like.

/ MIKEY FOLEY SOLUTIONS EDITOR

MEDAL OF HONOR

■ The Germans winning WW2? Noo! It can't happen!



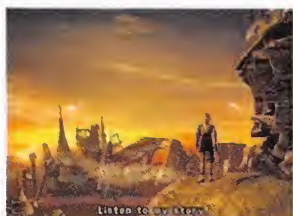
DEUS EX

■ You may need to turn the lights on to read these.



FINAL FANTASY X

■ Can't find the required 11 years to finish it off?



FREEKSTYLE

SICK TRICKS, COMBOS AND ALL OUT SPEED NEED TO BE PRACTICED AND MASTERED IN ORDER TO BECOME THE TRUE FREEKSTYLE CHAMP.

OK YOU TWO-WHEELING FREAKS, IT'S TIME to get aggressive, time to get crazy and time to put those nerves of steel into play. Welcome to *PSW*'s essential guide to the best tactics and tricks you need to keep ahead of the pack.

RULES OF THE ROAD

THE KNACK OF EACH TRACK

The Freekstyle championship is not an easy one so it is imperative that you know each of the tracks like the back of your hand. Thinking you can hop straight into each new area and end up in the top three is a big mistake. Instead you may find yourself horrendously far behind through crashing, misjudging jumps and attempting

tricks that are impossible to land in some areas. Use the 'Free Ride' option to learn every curve, bump and shortcut in each track so that you know where you can pull off tricks to earn boost and points and where not to risk them.

BOOSTING

Another reason for learning each track before attempting the circuit is to ensure you get the most out of your boost. The first run through of tracks requires you to finish twice in the top three and once in first. This means that you need to learn when to earn boost, when to use boost and when to conserve boost. Tricks take up time. The longer you're in the air the more danger you are in of dropping a place, so when you need to finish in a certain

position it's important to earn your boost through quick tricks to save time. Slowly fill up your boost bar, using it sparingly in short bursts when you fumble a jump or take a knock. Try to have the boost bar at least half full when you enter the final lap, this way you can zip around the track without having to waste valuable time performing tricks.

GAINING ATTRIBUTE POINTS

After winning a race in the circuit you gain yourself a number of attribute points. The amount you get depends on your overall performance in the race, but they allow you to improve the speed, boost, control, jumping and landing skills of your racer. Careful distribution of these points is very important and can mean the difference



GIVE US BOOST Boosting in the right places is important.



TRICK ADDITION Small ramp+complex trick=broken neck.



SECRET TUNNEL Head into the mine for a nifty shortcut.



between winning and losing a race. Perhaps the most important two are speed and jumping, closely followed by control. Speed wins races and to finish in the top three requires you to build up this skill quickly. Jumping gains your greater air allowing you to pull off some of the more spectacular tricks, allowing you to build up boost more efficiently. Jumping becomes even more vital during the second round of racing where point targets need to be reached in order to qualify. You won't be able to use all of your earned points on one skill, so distribute them in this order; Speed, jumping, control, landing and boost.

CUTTING CORNERS

Shortcuts can be deceptive and must be mastered. The Free Ride option allows you to explore every inch of the tracks in order to find any secret tunnels, pathways or hidden jumps that let you to nip in ahead of the pack. Shortcuts are generally the

hardest parts of the tracks and the ability to tackle them at full speed is essential, otherwise they could cause you serious trouble. A mistimed leap over a barrier or over steering in a tight tunnel can grind you into the dirt, allowing your fellow riders to speed past. Find them, master them then use them. Simple as that.

MONUMENTAL MOTOPLEX

BEATING THE COMPETITION

This is the beginner's course, but don't think that you can simply sail through it and cross the line in first place. Monumental Motoplex is the perfect practice course and really gives you a taste of things to come, testing strict control, boost conservation, aggressive riding and trick tactics. There are a couple of short cuts here so it's an all out race to the finish. ■ **Short Cut One:** As soon as you land after the first huge leap, or after you cross the

lap finish line, you can veer to the left. There is a gully in the sand that leads to an underground tunnel. This tunnel needs to be taken at full speed, but it's extremely tight and needs practice. A crash in here can cause you serious problems and if you don't hit the end sand ramp at full speed and a little boost then you won't make the leap over the following barrier. Pull back as you hit the ramp to gain air and carry you over, through the bonus zone and safely landing on the other side of the corner. It's a great shortcut, but it needs practice.

■ **Short Cut Two:** In the last stretch of the track there is large tunnel. As you enter the tunnel, keep your eyes peeled for the bonus zone ahead. There is a small gap in the railings lining the top of the corner ahead and this needs to be hit at high speed. The trick with this shortcut is to not go too high and not go too low. You need to aim for the centre of the bonus zone, but if you hit it too high you'll clip the top of the metal ring. Hit it too

low and you'll clip the bottom of it. Both end up with you dropping like a sack of spuds to the ground below. Get it perfect and you smash through the glass and sail over the next corner. Again, this needs a lot of practice to master and the speed of your racer and bike affects how you need to take this jump. Practice makes perfect.

ACHIEVING TARGET TRICK POINTS

Ok, so you've beaten the racers in the first round and now you need to earn that huge trick point target and then come first. Think of it like this, you need to leave the last lap for pure speed in order to gain that vital pole position. This means that the first two laps require you to get the majority of the points. A good ballpark figure is to earn around two thirds of the target score in the first two laps. Impossible? No. Tricky? Extremely. This is where the bonus zones come into play as they give you a load of helpful points that are vital for reaching that target score. Apart from the obvious zones with the circular glass panels there are a couple of extra ones you should know about. The thing with these zones is that you do need to carry yourself over a certain distance in order to activate the bonuses.

■ **Secret Tunnel:** The previously mentioned tunnel leads out to a bonus zone. You need to hit the sand ramp at full speed and it





helps to boost if you have it. You also need to pull back to gain air. A nice combo trick with two of the shoulder buttons and **○** gives you a good score and the bonus simply adds a nice chunk of points to it.

■ **Side Ramp:** A few corners up from the start line look for a series of large flashing triangles lining the right of the track. Nip up onto the verge and you should see a ramp up ahead. Hit the ramp at full speed and boosting up it. Pull back to sail forward over the track below and if you clear enough ground you should gain the bonus zone points. A nice three shoulder button and **○** should see you earn some mighty points.

■ **Glass Bridge:** Up from the side ramp you enter a glass covered bridge with two ramps in it. Ignore the first and boost up the second. Again, pull back and sail up and over the second to last roof girder. You need to clear this girder in order to earn the bonus points.

CRUST BELT

BEATING THE COMPETITION

With plenty of winding tracks, low hung pipes and plenty of ground level obstructions, the Crust Belt is a tough course to master. The track forks in many places and picking the right route can mean finishing first or last. Look out for the red and green routes. Red routes are not necessarily short cuts, but they usually lead to massive leaps or bonus zones which you will need to hit in order to reach the target point score in the second run, so let's concentrate on coming in first to begin with.

■ **The first fork:** After a few twists and turns you soon arrive at the first of many route choices. Hook round to the left in order to follow the green route and here you can use short bursts of boost to speed around. Push down over the jumps to prevent yourself wasting time in the air and



with skillful control, you should be able to beat the red route racers.

■ **The second fork:** The next red route/green route choice is just up ahead from the first fork. This time, choose the red route. It's a lovely flat stretch of track that allows you to boost at full pelt along it. The large ramp at the end leads you to another bonus zone, but if it's a high placing you want avoid catching too much air by pushing forward to send the bike quickly to the ground. If you do need a little more boost then the time made through the flat stretch will more than likely allow a funky trick or two to earn some more.

■ **Red route? Blue route? Green route?:** You soon arrive at a triple choice. The fastest is the blue route that leads directly through the middle at ground level. This is the choice if you want to maintain your lead, but it is highly dangerous. A crash here can waste all of that hard work you've put in so far, so you need to practice taking

this path at high speed. The place is littered with crates, pipes and machinery so watch out. The crates can be smashed through, but they do obscure the hazards ahead. Keep your eyes on the road ahead and with quick reflexes you can zip through this area with ease. Prior knowledge of the layout is essential in order to prevent yourself from a nasty accident.

■ **Short Cut:** As you enter the area with the overhead coal buckets you should spot a blue Freestyle emblem. There is a gap in the barrier lining the corner and if you can speed through it you can leap the corner cutting out the large bend that many of the other racers choose to take. This jump has a couple of dangers though and there is not a lot of room for mistakes. One of things you need to watch out for is the coal buckets as they constantly move from left to right. If your jump is mistimed you can smack right into the side of one sending you painfully down to the ground. To be honest, avoiding these is down to a little luck, as it all depends on how they are positioned when you enter the area. There is a little room to steer around them in the air, but not a lot. If you make it past the coal buckets, you then need to watch out for the ceiling girders up ahead. Gain too much air and you may crunch into them, don't gain enough and you'll miss landing on the next section of track.

■ **The final red route:** With the last fork, veer to the left to take the red route. This



TRACK HAZARD

STAY OUT OF THE ROUGH



THE CRUST BELT AND MANY OF THE TRACKS beyond it are littered with sand traps. These are basically thick patches of sand and can be recognised by the tyre tracks running through them. Avoid these at all costs as they slow you down.



BANG YOUR HEAD This hoop is tough so practice.



LUMPS AND BUMPS These can be a pain and slow you.



BUCKET O' LAUGHS Use the gap to jump the corner.



BIG LEAP Make the most of jumps. Trick points are a must.

path leads you to into a second warehouse and, similar to the previous blue route, there are some nasty obstructions to avoid. Boosting through this section should easily make up a few places or ensure you maintain your first place position. It's not quite as tricky as the last warehouse, but it still needs a little caution.

ACHIEVING TARGET TRICK POINTS

The crust belt offers few huge jumps; so earning the required 300,000 trick points takes a lot of practice and skill. The track is littered with small humps and you may find it difficult to pull off some of the big tricks. What you have to rely on are the combos so study your character's trick book and learn them. The more you remember, the more points you can earn as simply pulling the same trick off over and over again will not work, as repeated tricks slowly lose their point value. Remember to pull back on approach to each jump as the more air you get, the more tricks you can execute in a single jump. There are some big leaps though and these are listed below with a few trick tips.

■ **The first Bonus zone:** The basic rule of thumb is to always take the red routes. These lead you to some of the major jumps in the track as well as the bonus zones. The first red route takes you to a medium sized jump through the first bonus zone hoop. The

hoop is frustratingly low, so don't try to pull off a complex trick, instead try two of the shoulder buttons and \odot . This is a deceptively difficult zone to smash through and judging the right amount of air to gain requires practice.

■ **Up and over:** Once past the first bonus zone there is a nice sand ramp up ahead. Tap the boost button and pull back on approach as you can then leap over the mine cart tracks and pull off a nice trick. Get one of your big earners out by holding three of the shoulder buttons and the \odot .

■ **Super Bonus:** Take the next red route and boost through the tunnel. Hit the dirt ramp at full speed, pulling back to gain as much air as possible. You should be able to pull off two or three tricks in this one jump so make the most of it. Try a three-shoulder button and \odot trick, and then quickly release one of the shoulder buttons. You should now execute a quick combo move before landing. Make sure you smash through the bonus zone glass to gain the extra points.

■ **Green Route Bonus Zone:** When you reach the three-route choice, take the green route. The blue Freekout emblem signifies a bonus zone up ahead, so boost up the steep ramp and pull some major air. You need to clear the first two girders in order to activate the bonus points, but on your way try pulling off a three-shoulder button and \odot .



BOOST BONANZA Fill your boost in seconds using the huge jump.



MAJOR AIR Use this massive leap for a cool trick and bonus points.

■ **Mine tunnel bonus:** As mentioned previously in the 'Beat the Competition' section, the gap in the barrier lining the first bend in the mine tunnel leads to a bonus zone. Practice breaking through the barrier at full speed and the trick to activating the bonus points is to get your angle of trajectory just right. You need to be extremely careful not to hit the barrier lining the track opposite.

BURN IT UP

BEATING THE COMPETITION

The first half of the course is pretty straightforward, with some nice long stretches to really boost through and get you into the lead. It is when you enter the forest and quarry areas that you need to be on your guard as there are some nasty hazards to watch out for.

■ **Boost Earner:** Use the huge jump at the beginning of the lap to earn this boost and the best way to do this is to get as much air as you can then hold down $L2 + R2 + \odot$ and keep them held down until you have performed a double combo. This is a massive point earner, but for the sake of winning the race, the boost value is just what you need. You should also now only be a few tricks away from a Freekout, which is just what you need to gain that lead.

■ **Red route? Green route? Blue route?:**

Just after the first jump you're faced with a choice of route. For speed, the best route to take is the blue route, which is a relatively flat allowing you to boost your way through and maintain your lead.

■ **The forest:** This area of track throws up a number of dangers. For starters you have an awkwardly placed tree in the centre of the track. The jump through the centre of it can prove lethal if you aim too high or too low you can smack slap bang into it. The best thing to do is steer through the hole in the base of the tree.

■ **Quarry Shortcut:** As you exit the forest area, keep your eyes peeled for the blue Freekstyle emblem on the right of the track. Carefully avoid the small boulders on the track and boost up the ramp. You need a hell of a lot of air to make the leap over to the high ledge opposite the ramp, but if you make it you can cut out a huge part of the course. If it looks like you are going to miss the ledge, turn your bike to the right and try to bounce off the cliff wall. It is possible to do this and land on the track below, but if you're not careful a nasty smash can see you eating the dirt, allowing your fellow racers to nip past you.

■ **The Blast Zone:** You just know that if a huge boulder or two are going to roll across the track you'll hit it. Well this can happen if you don't watch the track ahead. Spot the rolling rocks before they flatten you.



START LAP ONLY Use the grass verge to earn some bonus points.



ACHIEVING TARGET TRICK POINTS

Burn it up offers up loads of point earning opportunities, but the 500,000 point target is a tough nut to crack, only because of the need to come first in the last lap. You need to earn around 400,000 by the end of the second so that you can concentrate on speeding through the last and this is not easy. Perhaps the best thing about this track is that the huge jumps contained within it allow you to plan a lot of your best point scoring tricks.

■ **First lap points:** This is a handy trick tip to remember for earning some mega points in the early stages of the race. As soon as the green light appears speed forward and keep your eye out for a blue Freestyle emblem lurking around the right of the track. Boost up the grass verge and holding down **R2** + **L2** + **○**, you should pull off a nifty combo. As soon as you have done this quickly release the **○**. You should then perform a second trick. Landing this gives you some huge points. Not only that, but it's a bonus zone too, so extra points all round!

■ **Big jump bonus:** Speed up the huge ramp up ahead and hit the boost button while pulling back. As you leave the ramp hold down the **L2** + **R2** + **○**. Keep these held down and you should be able to pull off three of the same combo moves. That's six tricks, tripled. Land it and you should be

nearly, if not already in the Freezone, allowing you to pull off a Super Sick Trick to earn an even bigger monster score.

■ **High track:** When you reach the three-route choice, take the red route and hit the second jump to land yourself on the high ramp. Boost along this to leap through the bonus ring while performing a second six trick manoeuvre in the same vein as the Big Jump Bonus.

■ **Bonus Bone:** Just up from the blast zone you should see a blue Freestyle emblem on the side of the track. Keep to the right of the track, boost up the dirt ramp and pull back. Keep pulling back to sail over the following ramp past the broken bone sign. The reason you should stick to the right of the track is because you will hit the sign. Make it past the sign and you should activate the bonus zone and the all-important points.

GNOME SWEET GNOME

BEATING THE COMPETITION

Few big jumps and a maze of dirt tracks make this one of the most competitive courses in the circuit. Its flat nature allows for plenty of boost time, but earning that all essential nitro is a tricky matter. The best tactic is to use the first lap to slowly fill up your boost meter by performing small yet neat combos. You can't pull much air from the many humps and bumps, so make use of the airtime you do get. For the final laps you need to maintain your lead and the bumpy track can lose you valuable time so learn which parts of the track you can hit the first ramp and pull enough air to clear the ones in-between and land on the last. This way, you won't end up bouncing up and down like a yo-yo as your competitors speed past. Shortcuts are few and far between, but there are a couple of nifty tricks and tips you can use to gain that little bit extra.

■ **The Bonus zones:** There are a couple of glass Bonus zones hanging dangerously low above the track. These are normally preceded by a ramp and for the purposes of winning the race the best advice is to avoid them. The glass zone is just big enough for you bike to fit through and it's highly likely that you'll crash into the metal hoop around the edge. Instead, hop over the ramp and push down to get your bike down to the ground as quickly as possible.

■ **The crab hedge:** Just up from the first Bonus zone you'll see another blue Freestyle emblem. Boost up the ramp, pull back to sail over the huge crab hedge and push up to force the bike back down to the ground. The other racers who sped around the lower track can now eat your dirt.

■ **Red route? Green route?:** Just up past the crab hedge you hit your first route choice. Boost up the red path and follow it around and up to the next ramp. Hit the boost and you soon find yourself flying

through a hedgy pair of rabbit ears. You should land ahead, or even further in front of the rest of the back.

ACHIEVING TARGET TRICK POINTS

Gnome Sweet Gnome does not throw up many point-scoring opportunities, as there are few major jumps. Instead you are going to have to rely on some nifty combs and bonus zone points.

■ **Bonus bonanza:** The first part of the track throws up three bonus zones in close



WHERE'D THEY COME FROM?

WATCH OUT IN THE QUARRY



THE QUARRY SHORTCUT CAN LOSE YOU A qualifying place. The other sneaky racers tend to use this nifty corner cut so if you find yourself in first until the very last moment you now know why. You have to practice using it otherwise serious frustration will ensue.



succession, but the small glass targets of the first two are very tricky to smash through. Again, only practice sees you through and that's without performing a stunt. The best tricks to pull are quick sharp combos so ensure you land them and earn your points. The next bonus zone is the huge leap over the crab hedge.

■ **Red route? Green route?:** The two routes up ahead both lead to bonus zones, the red route is the better of the two as it leads to a bigger jump. The green route leads to one of those small glass bonus targets and you won't earn as many points from it.

■ **Through the square window:** Another opportunity to gain some big points lies further up the track, just look for the two windows in the side of the building. They both lead to bonus zones, but as the window on the left is higher you can gain that little bit extra air, enabling you to pull off an even bigger trick.

LET IT RIDE

BEATING THE COMPETITION

This track is a huge sprawling track that twists, turns and overlaps at a dizzying rate. You are going to need some boost here as there are plenty of straights as well that allow you to make up any ground needed. With all its intricacies Let It Ride is actually quite an easy track to win on, but there are a few little tricks you should take into account if you are to succeed.



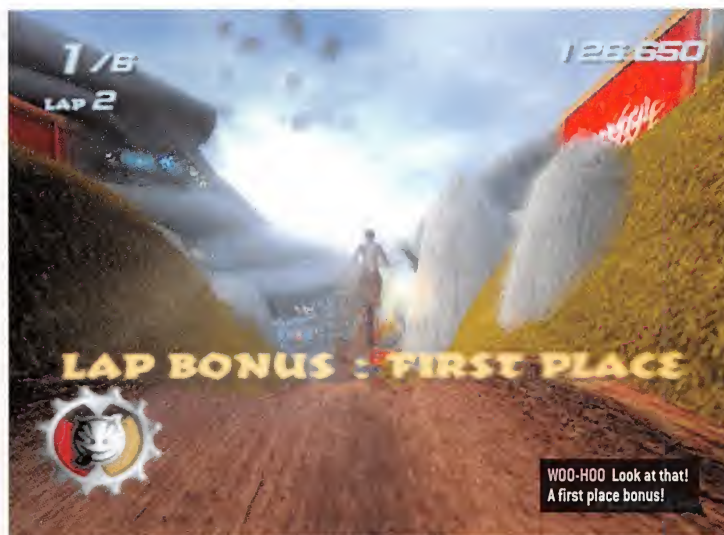
■ **Sand traps:** This is Vegas, the desert land, so there are a lot of sand traps littering the track. Most of them are pretty awkwardly placed in areas you can't help but hit as you speed around a corner, but with a little track knowledge you can avoid them and maintain your speed.

■ **Lumps and bumps:** Many of the long straights are covered with sand bumps and hitting every one of them will lose you speed. The best thing to do is either push forward as you ride over them to keep the bike from gaining too much air. Perhaps the better option is to boost up the first ramp in the line and pull back to clear the ones in that follow. With enough air you can glide over those nasty bumps and land safely past them. Now simply tap the boost button to speed out onto the next section of track.

■ **Red tracks:** Always take the red routes here as they take you on the shortest line. On the final stretch you come up to a fork in the road. As soon as you see it hit the boost and veer to the right. You can cut the corner of the red route track and blast forward to the finish line. More often than not, this small, yet useful tip, can speed you clear into the lead.

ACHIEVING THE TARGET POINTS

Combos, combos, combos! The huge humps in the track are perfect for getting out some slick combos and as you may notice, there are loads of them. The knack is to pull off a huge range of moves and combos so it is



vital that you don't simply repeat the same few tricks. There are also a couple of mega jumps leading into bonus zones so save your best tricks for them. To hit that target it's basically not where you jump, it's the moves you perform when you do. Variety will win the day and it is very easy to earn a Freekout here too, so coming first shouldn't be a problem.

ROCKET GARDEN

BEATING THE COMPETITION

This track may seem a little daunting at first because of the huge amount of activity that is going on all around you, from rockets launching, exploding barrels, smoke and irritating sirens. After a few practice laps you'll begin to think different as most of the track can be taken at full speed. All you have to remember is to keep your eyes fixed on the track ahead as there are many sudden splits, twists and turns. Luckily, there are few places where you can crash into the side barriers as the course itself is pretty wide all of the way through. There are a couple of places where you can gain the advantage over your competitors.

■ **Red route? Green Route?:** Take the red route and speed through the hump filled track ahead. Use the same 'gain air and clear' technique as used on the Let It Ride course to avoid wasting time bouncing up and down all over the place. This route is much faster than the green one but it needs to be handled with some degree of class, skill and control.

■ **Up and over:** As soon as you come out of the red route, keep to the right and speed over the gaps in the track. Occasionally you drop to the lower level but this happens pretty smoothly, unlike the central area of the track, which sees you jolting up and down all over the place.

ACHIEVING TARGET TRICK POINTS

Again, like the Let It Ride course, the Rocket Garden track throws up plenty of opportunities to earn some big points. Not through spectacular tricks, but through the number of jumps you have available to you to perform lots of nifty combos. It does take a lot of practice to combine the many jumps with the twisting track so always be prepared to steer yourself out of danger in the air before you land. There are a couple of

big jumps thrown in and usually these incorporate a bonus zone.

■ **Launch or be launched:** The first big jump is hidden away and is very easy to miss. At the beginning of the lap you soon reach the first split in the track. Choose your route then quickly veer back into the centre of the track. You should see a ramp that you can then boost up to gain some serious air. Watch out for the huge rocket that launches up through the centre of the jump. You may need to steer around it to land on the ledge behind the rocket, but some of your more complex tricks can easily be performed on the way.

■ **The sliding ramp:** Just past the rolling barrels you can see three ramps in the distance. There is a silver portion of ramp that slides between the three so keep an eye on how it's moving and boost up it. This requires perfect timing but if you hit it correctly you can amass huge air and massive points.

■ **Red route? Blue route?:** Take the blue route and you soon enter the shuttle factory. This place is full of rocket fuselages and to get the most out of this area you should take the middle path. Remember to pull back otherwise you'll plummet down to the factory floor. The reward is a bonus zone so as you head up, amass some points by pulling tricks off and end by performing a complex trick through the bonus hoop.

/ ALEX CHENERY

TRACK HAZARD

A BARREL OF LAUGHS OR SIMPLY A BLAST?



WATCH OUT FOR THE STREAM OF EXPLOSIVE barrels that roll along one area of track. These can be a real pain if you hit one, literally. Keep your eyes on the flow of barrels as you approach, spot a gap and boost through.

MINI TIPS



WE HELP YOU AVOID THE BORING BITS, LIKE PLAYING THE GAMES, TO ENJOY THE GOOD BITS, LIKE ACTING SMUGLY TO FRIENDS.

FREESTYLE

SPECIAL CODES

LOKSMITH	Unlock Everything
WTCHKPRS	Slow Motion / Blur Mode
ALLFREEK	Always "Freekout" Time
FLYSOLO	No Bike Mode

CHARACTER CODES

COOLDUDE	Unlock Clifford Adoptante
TOUGHGUY	Unlock Mike Jones
BLONDIE	Unlock Jessica Patterson
GIMEGREG	Unlock Greg Albertyn
POPULATE	Unlock All Characters

OUTFIT CODES

HELLOOOO	Unlock Ecko MX Outfit (Mike Metzger)
BODYART	Unlock All Tatted Up Outfit (Mike Metzger)
RIPPED	Unlock Muscle Bound Outfit (Brian Deegan)
SOLDIER	Unlock Commander Outfit (Brian Deegan)
THNKPINK	Unlock Fun Lovin' Outfit (Leeann Tweeden)
SPICY	Unlock Red Hot Outfit (Leeann Tweeden)
KIDSGAME	Unlock Playing Jax Outfit (Stefy Bau)
INVASION	Unlock UFO Racer Outfit (Stefy Bau)
WINGS	Unlock Tiki Outfit (Clifford Adoptante)
NOSLEEVE	Unlock Tankin' It Outfit (Clifford Adoptante)
BABYBLUE	Unlock Blue Collar Outfit (Mike Jones)
BOXCARS	Unlock High Roller Outfit (Mike Jones)
LAYERS	Unlock Warming Up Outfit (Jessica Patterson)
NOT2GRLY	Unlock Hoodie Style Outfit (Jessica Patterson)
ILOOKGUD	Unlock Sharp Dresser Outfit (Greg Albertyn)
COMET	Unlock Star Rider Outfit (Greg Albertyn)
YARDSALE	Unlock All Outfits

TRACK CODES

CARVEROK	Unlock Burn It Up Track
CLIPPERS	Unlock Gnome Sweet Gnome Track
BLACKJAK	Unlock Let It Ride Track
TODAMOON	Unlock Rocket Garden Track
WIDEOPEN	Unlock Crash Pad FreeStyle Track
TUCKELLE	Unlock The Burbs FreeStyle Track
TRAKMEET	Unlock All Tracks

BIKE CODES

EYEDROPS	Unlock Bloodshot Bike (Mike Metzger)
BRRRRRAP	Unlock Rock Of Ages Bike (Mike Metzger)
SEVENTWO	Unlock Rhino Rage Bike (Mike Metzger)
WHATEVER	Unlock Mulisha Man Bike (Brian Deegan)
HEDBANGR	Unlock Heavy Metal Bike (Brian Deegan)
WHOZASKN	Unlock Dominator Bike (Brian Deegan)
OVENMITT	Unlock Hot Stuff Bike (Leeann Tweeden)
STYLIN	Unlock Trendsetter Bike (Leeann Tweeden)
GOODLOOK	Unlock Seducer Bike (Leeann Tweeden)
HEREIAM	Unlock Amore Bike (Stefy Bau)
SPARKLES	Unlock Disco Tech Bike (Stefy Bau)
TWONEONE	Unlock 211 Bike (Stefy Bau)
SUPDUDE	Unlock Gone Tiki Bike (Clifford Adoptante)
GOFLOBRO	Unlock Island Spirit Bike (Clifford Adoptante)
STOKED	Unlock Hang Loose Bike (Clifford Adoptante)
KICKBUT	Unlock Beater Bike (Mike Jones)
HORNS	Unlock Lil' Demon Bike (Mike Jones)
PLUNGER	Unlock Flushed Bike (Mike Jones)
HEKACOO	Unlock Speedy Bike (Jessica Patterson)
LIGHTNIN	Unlock Charged Up Bike (Jessica Patterson)
TONBO	Unlock Racer Girl Bike (Jessica Patterson)
ALLSHOOK	Unlock The King Bike (Greg Albertyn)
PATRIO	Unlock National Pride Bike (Greg Albertyn)
NUMBER1	Unlock Champion Bike (Greg Albertyn)
WHEELS	Unlock All Bikes

BRITNEY'S DANCE BEAT

PLAY AS BRITNEY

If you want the chance to play as the young lady herself then all you need to do is complete the Audition mode. Once this has been done, simply enter the Practice mode. Britney is now there in all of her busty loveliness for you to manipulate. But only for dancing...

BABY ONE MORE TIME VIDEO

Perhaps her finest moment! To play the video of Britney's first number one, all you need to do is earn 9999 points in auditions. Then you can sit back and enjoy the playground frolics of Ms Spears.



HIT X BABY ONCE MORE IN TIME She really has a fantastic pair of combos.

ALL STAR BASEBALL 2003



HOME BASE RUN PITCH... Unfortunately there's no cheat to explain the rules.

FOUR CHEATS FOR THE FOUR PEOPLE PLAYING THIS.

CHEAT MENU

At the controller selection screen hit the **L1** button to activate any cheats that have been bought.

TAUNT OPPONENT

Hit a homerun and as you approach third base, hit **L1** or **R1**. Your cheeky little player will show off to the opposition. The precocious brat!

CONTROL THE HOMERUN REPLAY:

As the replay of a homerun plays, play with the buttons to view your approach to third base from different angles.

SUPER FIT PITCHER

In Season, Franchise or Expansion mode, put any pitcher on the 15 day DL. Now take him back into your team line-up. You should notice that his energy is fully restored and ready to take on the best batters in the biz.



MEDAL OF HONOR: FRONTLINE

INVINCIBILITY – Pause the game and press **O**, **L2**, **D**, **L1**, **START**, **R1**, **R2**, **A**, **SELECT**

GAME CODES

GAME CODES	ENTER THESE INTO THE CODE SCREEN
One hit kills	WHATYOUGET
Earn gold star	MONKEY
You die with one hit	URTHEMAN
Every gun has a sniping scope	LONGSHOT
Bouncy grenades	BOING
Invisible enemies	WHEREERU
Earn gold star on previous level	TIMEWARP
Only headshots kill	GLASSJAW
Bullets won't harm you	BULLETZAP
Unlock Rolling Thunder level	LEMUR
Unlock Needle in a haystack level	BABOON
Unlock Horten's Nest level	GORILLA



MIKE TYSON HEAVYWEIGHT BOXING

UNLOCK ALL BOXERS AND THE MIKE TYSON CHALLENGE

To unlock every single boxer you must win the Bronze, Silver and Gold belts. To unlock the Mike Tyson challenge you must defeat Mike Tyson in the Final Fight for the Gold Belt.

UNLOCK MIKE TYSON FOR THE ONE PLAYER GAME

To unlock "Iron" Mike Tyson for a one player game, you must win the Gold Belt.



SLED STORM

BLACK DIAMOND TRACK

Win the game in Championship mode to unlock the Black Diamond track.

RIVAL CHALLENGE

Win the game in Championship mode to unlock rival challenge mode.

JAK AND DAXTER



INFINITE HEALTH

Pause the game and press **△**, **□**, **△**, **□**, **△**, **□**. Now your duo will become something of an untouchable force.

ATTACK

For a nifty little combo attack, punch, then jump for an uppercut, then do a dive attack.

GRAND THEFT AUTO 3

HOOKER TIP

Fancy some easy cash? Well steal yourself a convertible and crawl the streets for a hooker. Once you have one in your car, drive to a nice quiet area. You suddenly gain 125 points worth of health and the hooker gets out of the car without actually doing anything. Think of all of the time and money you've been wasting before now.

GAINING THE BULLET PROOF CHEETAH

During the Turismo mission where you get to race against a number of different cars, you soon get to race against a cheetah. As you race, smash into the cheetah and try to flip it over. If you manage it, get out of your car and wait next to the cheetah wreckage until the mission is failed. The driver then gets out and runs off. Unfortunately the doors are still locked and the only way to get it back to your hideout is to push it with your own car. Once there, flip it back over and voila! A new indestructible car.

GAINING THE BULLET PROOF PATRIOT

This can be found on the Staunton Island in Newport. Unfortunately it's in a crooked cop's lock-up. To get behind the wheel of this super cool car you first need to complete the task the cop gives you. Head over to his lock-up and do as he says. Once done, he gives you the keys, so drive it back to one of your hideouts and save the game.

GAINING THE SECURITY VAN

The Van Heist mission is the only chance in the game to steal yourself one of these awesome vehicles. During the frenzy, make sure you nab it extremely quickly and drive it back to one of your safe-houses.



DEUS EX: THE CONSPIRACY



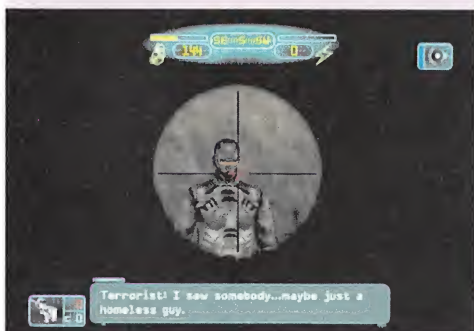
IT'S ALL A CONSPIRACY Terrorism. Drugs. The price of beer. All linked.

CHEAT MODE

Press **L2**, **R2**, **L1**, **R1**, **PS** in the Goals, Notes and Images screen. This offers the following cheat.

KEEP ALL YOUR GEAR

After you are arrested, press **□** as soon as the "Area Unknown, Time Unknown" text appears. This causes you to drop all of your equipment. Wait and you should soon be able to collect them back up and keep them all.



OUT OF SIGHT Perhaps you did see that, but it's your last vision. Boom.

ESPN NBA 2NIGHT 2002



MESSAGE 2 U Out my way or I'll make you flat, then make your head big!

CHEATS

Select Cheat in the Options menu and enter the following case sensitive codes.

Increased Performance	ABILITYBONUS
Easier Shooting	EXCELLENT
No Spectators	NOSPECTATOR
Easier Slam Dunks	DUNKERS
Big Feet	BIGFOOT
Big Hands	BIGHAND
No Overhead Lighting	DARKNESS
Flat Players	PANCAKE
Huge Heads	BIGHEAD
Before Image	BEFOREIMAGE
Invisible Bodies	INVISIBLE
Mini Players	MINIMINI

GODAI: ELEMENTAL FORCE



INVINCIBLE HIRO

Enter **L1**, **L2**, **○**, **□**, **L1**, **L2**, **○**, **□** at the main menu or during gameplay.

LEVEL SELECT

Enter **L1**, **L2**, **×**, **△**, **L1**, **L2**, **×**, **△** at the main menu

or during gameplay.

ONE-HIT KILLS WITH HIRO

Enter **L1**, **L2**, Left Analog UP, Left Analog DOWN, Left Analog LEFT, Left Analog RIGHT, **△**, **□**, **×**, **○**, at the main menu or during gameplay.

DAVID BECKHAM SOCCER

YOU'LL PROBABLY APPRECIATE THESE IF YOU SPORT A BLOND MANE AND PAINT YOUR FINGERNAILS PINK.

MANCHESTER ELEVEN TEAM

Enter the Professional Player Certificate in the Train With Beckham mode. Now score at least 20 points in Target Free Kicks to unlock the Manchester Eleven. You can find them for your entertainment in the Friendly Series, in the Beckham's Teams group.

WORLD ALL-STARS TEAM

Enter the Professional Player Certificate in the Train With Beckham mode. Score at least 20 points in Target Passing. The World All-Stars are now there to play with in the Friendly Series, in the Beckham's Teams group.

EDIT PLAYERS

Enter the Professional Player Certificate in the Train With Beckham mode. You now need to put at least five shots in the back of the net in the Free Play mode. The Edit Player option is now unlocked in Game Settings.



STOVEN GARRARD? The Argies gain revenge for their World Cup humiliation.

MATCH CLASSICS

Enter the Professional Player Certificate in Train With Beckham mode. Score at least 15 points in Target Shooting. Now select the Classic Match option in arcade mode to access the Manchester vs. Munich, Brazil vs. Italy, American Samoa vs. Australia, Calais vs. Nantes, Italy vs. England and Manchester vs. Leeds matches. Where's Perth Glory vs. Wollongong?

ENGLAND ELEVEN TEAM

Enter the Professional Player Certificate in the Train With Beckham mode. Score at least 20 points in Target Crossing to unlock the England Eleven in Friendly Series, in the Beckham's Teams group.

EXTRA STADIUMS

Enter the Professional Player Certificate in Train With Beckham mode. Successfully complete the Panel Bash in under ten seconds. Select Game Settings in the Friendly Series mode to access the 'legendary' Aztec Arena and Bouncy Castle stadia.



THE BEST CHEAT Open disc tray. Take out game. Put in PES. Reset PS2.

2002 FIFA WORLD CUP

- Unlock the all-Africa Team: Win the World Cup with a team from Africa.
- Unlock the all-Americas Team: Win the World Cup with a team from the Americas.
- Unlock the all-Asia Team: Win the World Cup with a team from Asia.
- Unlock the all-Europe Team: Win the World Cup with a team from Europe.
- Unlock the all-World Team: Unlock the other special teams.



RED CARD

CHEAT MODE: To unlock all teams, finals and stadiums enter **BIGTANK** as a name.

Unlock the SWAT team and Nova City stadium:
Beat the SWAT team in World Conquest mode.

Unlock the Matadors team and Coliseum stadium:
Beat the Matadors team in World Conquest mode.

Unlock the Ape team and Victoria Falls stadium:
Beat the Apes team in World Conquest mode.

Unlock the Martians team and USAFB001 stadium:
Beat the Martians team in World Conquest mode.

Unlock the Dolphins team and Nautilus stadium:
Beat the Dolphins team in World Conquest mode.

Unlock the Samurai team and Youhi Gardens stadium:
Beat the Samurai team in World Conquest mode.



FINAL FANTASY X

COLLECTING THE FINAL AEONS

YOJIMBA

After leaving the Calm Lands area, head over to the bridge near to Mt. Gagazet. You can find the Sunken Cave under this bridge so make your way into it and find Yojimba at the back. Pay him 250,000 and he's yours for the taking.

ANIMA

Make sure you've collected all of the Destructive Sphere treasures from the six temples. Once you have, use the airship to head to the Baaj Temple and defeat the boss guarding the entrance. Now enter the temple and touch all of the stones. The chamber to Favth should now slide open.

MAGUS SISTERS

Make your way over to Mt. Gagazet and catch all of the monsters there. Now go to the battle arena to collect your bonus item. Next, go to the Remiem Temple in the Calm Lands and fight the summoner inside. Defeat all of her Aeons before heading through the coloured door at the back of the area.



SMASH COURT PRO TOURNAMENT



IT'S ONLY JUST OUT AND ALREADY WE OFFER YOU THESE CHEATS AND EXTRAS!

SUPER HARD GAMEPLAY

Complete the Time Attack mode under the hard difficulty setting.

HITOMI YOSHINO

Select any female player and beat the Arcade mode without losing, under the hard difficulty setting. Enter the Exhibition mode and move the cursor past Rafter on the character selection screen. You should find the Hitomi Yoshino.

PLAY AS RED ACE

Select any male player and beat the Arcade mode without losing, under the hard difficulty setting. Enter the Exhibition mode and move the cursor past Rafter on the character selection screen. You should find the Red Ace.

THE LORD OF THE RINGS [2001]



CONICAL HEADWEAR, ENCHANTED JEWELLRY AND OVERSIZED FEET GALORE. IT'S THE FIRST IN THE MOVIE TRILOGY THAT'S BIGGER THAN GOD.

■ **Starring:** Elijah Wood
■ **Director:** Peter Jackson
■ **Rated:** M15+
■ **Genre:** Fantasy
■ **Distributor:** Roadshow



WITH THE NOVELS read by over 100 million people worldwide, director Peter Jackson

(*Heavenly Creatures, The Frighteners*) had a lot to live up to when re-creating J.R.R. Tolkien's Lord of the Rings saga. You can't please everyone, but Tolkien's 14-year personal adventure from Hobbiton to Mordor

could never have been brought to celluloid without the undying dedication of a true fan. Jackson's cinematic success grows from the intricate nature in which he approached his own two-year adventure. Breaking the Australian box office record for the biggest opening day with A\$4,166,911 and exceeding US\$800million worldwide, Jackson's film has raised our expectation of what a filmmaker can achieve when provided with a truly grand story.

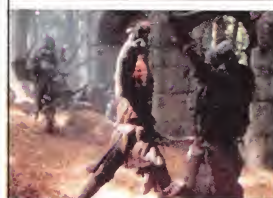
Small in stature Frodo (Elijah Wood), a rosy cheeked, hairy footed Hobbit, sets out on a journey that proves what is more

important than physical dominance is strength of character. *Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* sees the company of heroes begin their journey to Mordor. Their quest is to destroy a ring of absolute evil with the power to corrupt and enslave the world. With the basic premise of good versus evil, the story is easy to follow for the uninitiated watcher and faithful enough to the book for the devoted fan to enjoy. It is rare for an adaptation to film to truly capture the essence of the book, and Jackson has not underestimated his audience.

Jackson's dedication to pay

homage to the world's greatest fantasy writer is what drives this film. Giving the characters more than simply a residence in Middle Earth, Jackson uses complexity of detail to present a believable representation of cultures having existed for thousands of years. In a land set to pre-date history, a Europe long past, he packages a myriad of detail, design and craftsmanship, giving life to the company of heroes. It is not hard to see how the beauty of the film has been allowed to grow. Creating realism through detail meant everything had to be built from scratch. With sets the size of city

COUNTER CLOCK



53:24:48 Arrow on the hill

An epic cinematic battle, the like of which perhaps only *Gladiator* and *Braveheart* equal, ends in tragedy as Boromir perishes following a glorious stand-off with Saruman's forces. The agony continues as the camera pans onto the grief stricken face of Legolas (Orlando Bloom), whose expression could touch the coldest of hearts.

EXTRAS, EXTRAS!



DOCU-MATION

There are no fewer than eight internet shorts about the film, although none of them focus on beards and how to save dwarves by their beards and general beard care tips or how to grow the best beard. Shame.



TV SPECIALS

You get two documentaries about the film – the Fox Network's special and the Sci-Fi Channel's *The Path To Middle Earth*. See behind the scenes and check out the stunning effects! In American!



THE TWO TOWERS

Top of the pile for most people will surely be the ten-minute preview of the second film in the LOTR trilogy (*Should that be trollogy? – Ed*), *The Two Towers*. Look out for Helm's Deep. If you can see it in the darkness.

When our gallant Hobbit heroes enter the village of Bree you may want to pay a little more attention to a dark-bearded stranger oddly gnawing on a carrot. Widely referred to as a Hobbit during the shoot, the often barefooted Peter Jackson has a short cameo role in the first of the trilogy.

With five crews working at any time during filming there isn't much that wasn't captured for posterity. A highlight is the unfazed farmer repeating the story of the Hobbiton's creation. It is obvious for him LOTR is nothing more than some extra money, yet his monotone voice and deadpan expression are priceless.

The extras DVD gives you a very brief look at Electronic Arts' *The Two Towers* game due for November release. See page 27 for a detailed look at what we're already calling a Golden Axe for the new century.



BEARDS All the rage, apparently.



blocks, Tolkien's vivid descriptions were given life through an army of technicians, blacksmiths, leather-workers and medieval armour experts. Weapons were forged using authentic processes. 900 handcrafted swords were forged using the medieval processes of hand and hollow grounding, with light steel and spring steel blades providing an authentic shapes, weight and sound for the camera. Costumes containing up to 50 metres of material each (Ringwraiths) and more than 1600 pairs of prosthetic feet and ears individually sized and shaped for the actors. Each of the 200 latex orc heads is unique, with yak hair woven strand by strand to provide the various hairstyles. Each of these aspects combined together to complete the look of Middle Earth.

It is only in the last ten years



that the development of special effects has reached the level where a filmmaker could attempt a fantasy film of this magnitude. Unlike other attempts at the fantasy genre, Jackson has not allowed the special effects to dominate characters and story. Digital effects accentuate the look, whether adding "dirt under the fingernails of the cave troll" or breathing life to Tolkien's characters. Weta Digital, an offshoot of New Zealand's special effects company Weta Workshop, gathered together a team of computer artists, animators, modellers, digital painters and motion editors to produce the realistic look of Middle Earth and its creatures. Every frame shot from the trilogy is stored in a digital library, which gives the creators the ability to manipulate each aspect of the film from lighting to landscape. As by far the most sophisticated digital creature of the film, Gollum uses a combination of computer animation and motion-capture technology, generating the digital skin slipped over actor Andy Serkis. The combination of programs gave Gollum the look of

fluid motion without the disjointed "computer generated look". The *Two Towers* should highlight the level of achievement reached in digital graphics by Weta for the trilogy.

Selecting an actor for more than just guaranteed box office success has become a rarity in films of late. Even writing scripts around actors seems more common. The diversity and depth of the *Lord of the Rings* cast proves to be a breath of fresh air. Many were shocked at Liv Tyler's inclusion until she elegantly and effortlessly breathed the Elvish language to life. Sean Astin has not taken on a major role since Encino Man, but is perfect as Frodo's loyal and somewhat goofy best friend, Sam. Screen veterans, Sir Ian McKellen and Christopher Lee occupy the roles of the duelling wizards with great presence and energy. Lee's booming voice gives Saruman more than just a cardboard cut-out of evil. McKellen presents Gandalf with the aura of a powerful wizard and loving friend. His facial expressions light the film from the moment that he first sights Bilbo Baggins.

A massive undertaking, *Lord of the Rings* was always going to

achieve epic status, even if only for its length. While audiences have not been provided with a rewarding closure, the final two films should provide a spectacular conclusion. While Tolkien purists may take aim at the liberties taken with the story, at a lengthy three hours even they would admit something had to go. The film's shortcomings can be easily overcome with the DVD ability to pause at will. A self-confessed fan of the special edition DVD, Jackson is releasing two editions of *Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* on DVD. The August edition contains three 30-minute documentaries, 14 featurettes and a ten-minute teaser of *The Two Towers* providing a detailed, if repetitive, look behind the scenes through the eyes of cast and crew. In November we'll see a four-disc box set containing 30 minutes of extra footage added to the film.

Jackson has ultimately created history with fans unlikely to forget the experience in a hurry. With *The Two Towers* due out in December it's not long till we can continue our own journey closer to Mordor.

/Vanessa Morgan



FEY ELVES Girls love them.



9

EXTRAS DISC ONE

- Widescreen version of the film
- Dolby Digital Ex 5.1 Surround Sound
- Stereo
- English Subtitles

DISC TWO

- Exclusive 10-minute behind the screens preview of two towers
- Three in-depth documentaries
- Houghton Mifflin Welcomes You to Middle Earth
- The Quest for the Ring – A Fox TV Special
- A Passage to Middle Earth – Sci-Fi Channel Special
- 14 Featurettes exploring locales and cultures of middle earth.
- Enya "May It Be" music video
- Peter Jackson - Making of Two Towers
- Preview of Electronic Arts', The Two Towers.
- Inside look into Special Edition

9



DVD INSIDER

NEWSFACTS, COMING THROUGH! STEP ASIDE!

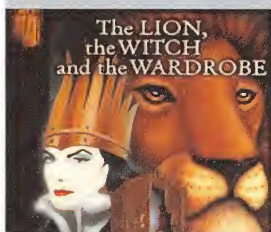


/MORE MILLA

Resident Evil director Paul Anderson has let slip a few factoids regarding the inevitable sequel based on *Resident Evil: Nemesis*. In an interview with *The Arrow*, he's quoted as saying: "It's definitely more of a fully loaded action movie. Where the first one was sort of claustrophobic horror, *Nemesis* will be a lot more expansive. *Nemesis* will take place in one night in Raccoon City after it's been overruled with the undead. You have a group of survivors fighting for their lives and trying to get out of the city." Further, he also reveals that several of the original's cast will return and that he also has a further sequel planned out already. Though the script is done, fans may have to wait a little while before seeing Milla Jovovich again as Anderson is also working on a treatment for the *Aliens* vs *Predator* movie.

/ONIMUSHA STAR RETURNS

Takeshi Kaneshiro, whose face was virtualised onto the hero of Capcom's *Onimusha*, stars in an upcoming hi-octane action-adventure called *Returner*. WE can't tell you much about the story or anything since the website's all in Japanese, but we can vouch for how cool it all looks. Check out www.returner.net and download the awesome trailer for a sneak peek. Thank us later.



/FOR THE KIDS

Children's bedtime favourite *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* has been signed up as a major motion picture with *Shrek* director Andrew Adamson helming the print to popcorn translation. "Narnia was such a vivid and real world to me as a child, as it is to millions of other fans. I'm excited about giving those fans an epic theatrical experience worthy of their imaginations and driving a new generation toward the works of C.S. Lewis," said Adamson. "Making a film that crosses generations is a far easier task when the source material resonates such themes as truth, loyalty and belief in something greater than yourself."

THE VERY BEST OF BOTTOM (VARIOUS)



■ **Starring:** Rik Mayall, Ade Edmondson
 ■ **Director:** Various
 ■ **Rated:** M15+
 ■ **Genre:** Comedy
 ■ **Distributor:** Roadshow



IF THE YOUNG ONES

showed degenerate students slumming it in London under the tyranny of Thatcher, then *Bottom* shows these same men grown older, smellier, uglier and if possible more stupid. A perfect premise for the vulgar humour and pseudo-violent slapstick that is the stock in trade of these two demi-stars of old.

The two halves of *Bottom* spend most of their time in a dirty flat in

London arguing away their minor lives. Richard Richard (Mayall) is a sweaty, disgusting virgin who wants nothing more than to "do it" to any girl. He is pure pantomime as the self-appointed star, treading the fine line between high enthusiasm and overacting. Eddie Hitler is an absent-minded, violent drunk. The result is five half-hour episodes that are frequently funny, often tasteless and always unnerving. Hilarious in small doses – reminding you that your life is really quite good actually.

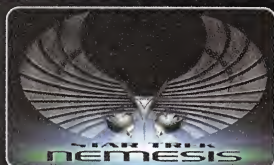
/JOHN DEWHURST

EXTRAS

■

STAR TREK ONLINE! TRAILER

AN IMPRESSIVE NEW TRAILER HAS APPEARED ON THE NET, AND WE'VE GOT SOME STILLs FOR YOU...



IF YOU JUST CAN'T WAIT UNTIL THE FILM'S OFFICIAL RELEASE LATER this year, you can get yourself a good eyeful nonetheless at <http://nemesis.startrek.com>. Sadly if you want to see it full screen you'll need to splash out for Quicktime Pro, but a smaller version is available for free. It's definitely worth a look.

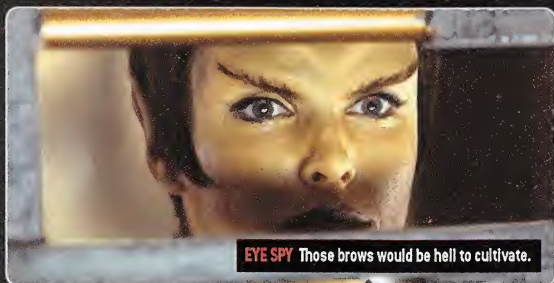
It features some impressive action sequences, including a manic jeep chase and some stylishly moody destruction – and as the film's an even number (it's the tenth), *Star Trek* lore has it that the whole thing should be good. Only the odd numbers blow. As you'd expect, the space-based visuals are sumptuous, but the alien prosthetics and makeup remain rather in the Cornish pasty/Swarfega range.



ENTERPRISING Vapour trails! Maybe.



SPARKS FLY Yet no one ever does repairs.



EYE SPY Those brows would be hell to cultivate.



UG-LEE It's a race of The Master's from Buffy!

SILICON CELLULOID

1 DEUS EX: THE CONSPIRACY What if it was a film?



THE GAME:

Rookie UNATCO agent JC Denton unravels an age-old government conspiracy to consolidate world power in the hands of a few puppeteers by decimating the population with disease and seizing control of all global electronic communications. Throughout, the player relies upon his wits and an array of high-tech weapons and gadgets to overcome obstacles via stealth, sabotage or firepower. At the climax, Denton peers deep into his soul to determine the best future for the entire human race.

THE FILM:

Rookie UNATCO agent JC Denton unravels an age-old government conspiracy to consolidate world power in the hands of a few puppeteers by decimating the population with disease and seizing control of all global electronic communications. Throughout, the hero relies upon looking cool in a black trenchcoat and an array of snappy one-liners to overcome obstacles via incessant action sequences featuring heavy Matrix style slo-mo special effects. At the

climax, Denton peers deep into the test-screen audience to determine the best future for truth, justice and the American way.

STARRING: We'd like to see Jude Law or Guy Pearce, but it'll probably be Keanu.

DIRECTED BY: Dark City visionary Alex Proyas would be perfect, but Resident Evil violator Paul Anderson will probably get the nod.

WILL IT WORK?

Considering the whole point of Deus Ex is to let the player decide how they want to play, a film adaptation stuck with a linear narrative seems a contradiction in terms. However, the timely concept of global terrorism coupled with the perennially cool mirrorshades and dystopian cyber-future should go down a treat in a post-Matrix trilogy world. So long as the moral and political ambiguity isn't replaced by Big Guns, Deus Ex: The Movie has the potential to be a new Blade Runner.

BOOGIEPOP PHANTOM (2001)



- Starring: Jessica Calvello
- Director: Takashi Watanabe
- Rated: M15+
- Genre: Drama
- Distributor: AV Channel



A JAPANESE URBAN legend, *Boogiepop Phantom* is a campfire story, a sleep-over tale and an anecdote told to scare children into bed. Or at least it appears to be...

Strange forces are at play within the city. Five years have passed since a string of grisly murders took place and reverberations of the past have come back to affect the present.

Once summoned, Boogiepop is said to pass through dimensions, but who or what she is the viewer must decide.

With visual similarities to *Lain: Serial Experiment*, the dark sepia animation and vaseline-on-the-lens look portrays the eeriness and melancholy of growing up and self-discovery. The twelve episodes are individual stories, but threads loosely link the four-disc series.

With the combination theme of teen dating and teen death (*Sounds good - Ed*), *Boogiepop Phantom* is anything but straightforward. Learn the character names quickly or you will find yourself lost in the series



and have to start again. With the exception of the inappropriately cheerful theme tune, the soundtrack is one of the highlights of this surreal series.

—VANESSA MORGAN



5

EXTRAS



8

NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE (2001)



- Starring: Jamie Pressley
- Director: Joel Gallen
- Rated: MA15+
- Genre: Comedy
- Distributor: Columbia TriStar

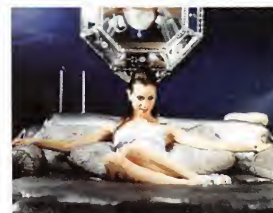


HOW MANY TEEN movies does it take to create a decent story line? Well, at last count *Not Another Teen Movie* had found it necessary to cobble together the "plots" of fourteen. Following the lead of our all time favourite Freddie Prinze Jr flick (*She's All That*), *Not Another Teen Movie* takes the ridiculous and makes it ludicrous, in the process providing a giggle or two. The fun of

the film is guessing which movie is being spoofed before the next scene begins, so it's important to be up to date on your teen flicks. The *Breakfast Club* scene is a must for devoted fans, with Principal Vernon (Paul Gleason) making an appearance to hand out detentions and utter the immortal phrase, "The next time I have to come in here, I'm crackin' skulls!"

With a virtually unknown cast, *Not Another Teen Movie* succeeds due to a great writing team, two of whom wrote *Scary Movie 1 & 2*, and a director who undoubtedly grew up on a not-so-healthy diet of really awful teen films. At least he's put it to good use.

—VANESSA MORGAN



6

EXTRAS With features including the original ending and 16 deleted scenes, you get more than your money's worth. Joel Gallen's first short film is definitely worth a look and there is always the teen movie trivia game to keep you amused.



7

SOUND STATION



XENOSAGA: DER WILLE ZUR MACHT

■ **Label:** Digicube
 ■ **Composer:** Yasunori Mitsuda
 ■ **CDs:** 2
 ■ **Verdict:**
 ■■■■■■■■ 8

As was mentioned in last month's Otaku Alley, *Xenosaga* has very little chance of being released here, but by no means should that stop you from checking out this OST.

Conducting the London Philharmonic Orchestra, legendary *Chrono Trigger* composer Yasunori Mitsuda has woven an intricate web of delicate and diverse sounds with this soundtrack that matches and often exceeds anything else we've heard on the PlayStation2. Ranging from the dystopian, pseudo-industrial hum of U-TIC System to the lulling symphonic strings of Zarathustra, this baby has everything you'd expect from Squaresoft. Excellent work, indeed.



FINAL FANTASY X

■ **Label:** Tokyo Pop
 ■ **Composer:** Nobuo Uematsu
 ■ **CDs:** 4
 ■ **Verdict:**
 ■■■■■■■■ 7

Despite being genuinely enjoyable, it must be said that this soundtrack is a major disappointment. Compared to other soundtracks in the series, particularly VI and

VII, this tenth *Final Fantasy* OST is extraordinarily bland. The main problem is the complete lack of Uematsu's trademark melodies. Out are the twinkling harps and sweeping orchestral flourishes, in are the cheap techno boops of repetitive bass and string synthesis. There are some moments when Uematsu returns to form – such as in *Warping to a Different Dimension* and *Place of Ordeals* – but they're too sporadic. Let's hope he's done a better job on *Final Fantasy XI*.

ASUKA'S BOOKMARKS

Favourite websites of your favourite PS2 characters



Radio Lazlow 2000

www.lazlow.com



Lazlow's Chatterbox program can be occasionally entertaining – especially when that ridiculous Toni Cipriani calls in to expose his weaknesses to the entire city. On this

Though I prefer not to waste my time on trifling idiocies like talkback radio,

site you will find everything you could possibly want to know about Lazlow... and maybe a bit more than that.

Love Media

www.lovemediasite.com



As my brother always tells me, "a wise man keeps his friends close and his enemies closer". Donald Love has assured us that he is not hostile to Yakuza interests in Liberty, but his ambition and our informants tell a different tale. Of course, he doesn't advertise his true intentions on the Internet, but it is a good means of keeping our eye on him regardless.

Oichu Kabu Casino

<http://www.rockstargames.com/grandtheftauto3/flash/casino/>



The website for the casino owned by my brother, Kenji. He does not

trust the Internet and describes it as a 'gaijin tool for cultural domination', though I have tried many times to explain its importance as a source of potential profit. At any rate, Kenji has not updated his site once since it was first established over a year ago.

The D/s Kiosk

www.cuffs.com



My habits are well known to anyone who has ever visited me in my condo, so the inclusion of this site shouldn't come as a surprise. Maria and I often visit here whenever we are looking for suitable entertainment on a Friday night. The webmasters are, of course, amateurs compared to myself.

Origami

www.origami.com



It is a little known fact that I often partake in one of the most ancient of Japanese arts. This site is an excellent source of information for those interested in making doves and paper-cranes. Of course, most of my origami creations depict things that would be unsuitable to name in this publication.

The Japanese Yakuza

<http://organizedcrime.about.com/cs/yakuza/>



For those interested in finding out about our organisation, this is an excellent resource for information on the Yakuza. It is irritating that most of the articles featured here are biased against us, but what can one expect from a group of gaijins with no real understanding of Japanese culture?

INCOMING!

GAMES CURRENTLY WINGING THEIR WAY TO PS2

TITLE	PUBLISHER	TYPE
SEPTEMBER		
Aggressive Inline	Acclaim	Sports
Ape Escape 2	Sony	Platformer
Barbarian	Interplay	Fighting
Battle Engine Aquila	Ozisoft	Action Strategy
Blade 2	Activision	Action
Donald Duck: Who is PK?	Ubisoft	Platformer
Ferrari 355 Challenge	Sony	Racing
Formula One 2002	Sony	Racing
H2Overdrive	Ubisoft	Action
Hitman 2	Ozisoft	Action Adventure
Kelly Slater's Pro Surfer	Activision	Sports
Largo Winch	Ubisoft	Adventure
Lethal Skies	THQ	Flight Combat
Master Rallye	Take2	Racing
Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX 2	Activision	Sports
MX Superfly	THQ	Racing
Need for Speed: Hot Pursuit 2	Electronic Arts	Racing
NHL 2003	Electronic Arts	Sports
Project Zero	Take2	Adventure
Riding Spirits	Acclaim	Racing
Shox	Electronic Arts	Racing
Space Channel 5 Pt 2	Sony	Rhythm Action
Stitch: Experiment 626	Sony	Platformer
Street Hoops	Activision	Sports
Stuntman	Ozisoft	Racing
Sum of All Fears	Ubisoft	Shooter
Tekken 4	Sony	Fighting
The Thing	Vivendi	Action Adventure
This is Soccer 2003	Sony	Sports
Timesplitters 2	Ozisoft	Shooter
Turok Evolution	Acclaim	Shooter
Villeneuve Racing	Ubisoft	Racing

OCTOBER		
Colin McRae Rally 3	Ozisoft	Racing
FIFA 2003	Electronic Arts	Sports
Ghost Recon	Ubisoft	Action Strategy
Grand Theft Auto: Vice City	Take2	Action Adventure
Metropolis Mania	Ubisoft	Strategy
Ninja Assault	Sony	Shooter
Onimusha 2	THQ	Action Adventure
Rally Fusion: Race of Champions	Activision	Racing
Run Like Hell	Interplay	Action Adventure
Scorpion King	Vivendi	Action Adventure
Sega Soccer Slam	Ozisoft	Sports
Simpsons Skateboarding	Electronic Arts	Sports
Summoner 2	THQ	RPG
Taz Wanted	Ozisoft	Platformer
Terminator	Ozisoft	Shooter
The Lost	TBA	Action Adventure
Total Immersion Racing	Vivendi	Racing

November		
007: Nightfire	Electronic Arts	Shooter
Black & Bruised	Vivendi	Fighting
Conflict Desert Storm	Ozisoft	Action Strategy
Dark Angel	Vivendi	Action
Delta Force: Land Warrior	Electronic Arts	Shooter
ET: Return to the Green Planet	Ubisoft	Adventure
Sungrave	Activision	Shooter
Halloween	Take2	Adventure
Harry Potter: Chamber of Secrets	Electronic Arts	Adventure
Inquisition	Take2	Adventure
Kingdom Hearts	Sony	RPG
LOTR: Fellowship of the Ring	Vivendi	RPG
Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers	Electronic Arts	Action
Marvel vs Capcom 2	THQ	Fighting
Minority Report	Activision	Action
Ratchet & Clank	Sony	Platformer
Red Faction 2	THQ	Shooter
Robocop	Interplay	Shooter
Star Wars: Jedi Knight 2	Activision	Shooter
The Getaway	Sony	Action Adventure
Tomb Raider: Angel of Darkness	Ozisoft	Action Adventure
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4	Activision	Sports
Ty the Tasmanian Tiger	Electronic Arts	Platformer
World Rally Championship 2	Sony	Racing
Wreckless	Activision	Racing
WWE Smackdown! Shut Your Mouth	THQ	Fighting
X-Men: Next Dimension	Activision	Fighting

DIRECT HIT!
GRAND THEFT AUTO : VICE CITY
Distributor: Take 2
Type: Action Adventure



The most anticipated game of the year (at least, now that *Timesplitters 2* has arrived) is almost ready. According to our mysterious sources deep within the Rockstar nuclear bunker, *Vice City* is shaping up extremely well. Any issues with the previous *GTA* have been addressed, while you can expect more of everything else (cars, weapons, missions) as well as several non-four-wheel vehicles, too.



DIRECT HIT!
THE GETAWAY
Distributor: Sony
Type: Action Adventure



Now four years in development, *The Getaway* remains a big question mark for Sony. Its thunder was stolen by *GTA3* last year, but even with an extra year of work in the studio it's now forced to compete with *Vice City*. Initial impressions suggest framerate problems and a difficulty in gelling the adventure sequences with the driving action. Time will tell...



inform

The Official Australian Games Chart

Compiled by Inform in association with IEAA

W/E 4 August 2002

TOP 20

Best Selling Full Price PlayStation2 Games (over \$50)

- ◆ Gran Turismo 2002 Concept Racing
- ▲ Medal Of Honor: Frontline Action
- ▲ Grand Theft Auto 3 Adventure
- ▲ MX Rider + Test Drive Open Rd Racing
- ▲ Spider-Man: The Movie Adventure
- ▲ Vampire Night Action
- ▲ Final Fantasy X RPG
- ▲ V-Rally 3 Racing
- ▲ Bond 007 Agent Under Fir Action
- ▲ Smash Court Tennis Pro T Sports
- ▲ Prisoner Of War Adventure
- ▲ Metal Gear Solid 2 Adventure
- ▼ Crazy Taxi & Remote Racing
- ▼ Crash Band 5: Wrath/Cortex Adventure
- ★ Jak & Daxter Precursor Legacy Adventure
- ★ Action Triple Pack 1 Compilation
- ▼ Ballistic Triple Pack 3 Compilation
- ★ Virtua Fighter 4 Action
- ▼ Britney's Dance Beat All Other
- ◆ Devil May Cry Action

★ New Entry ◆ Non Mover ▲ Up from last week ▼ Down from last week

Charts can be viewed at
www.informbd.com.au as part of 
For further information phone: 02 9264 0095 © 2002 by Inform. All rights reserved



STUFF

SEEMS INNOCENT, BUT THIS IS HOW THE DALEKS STARTED. STOP TECHNOLOGY NOW!



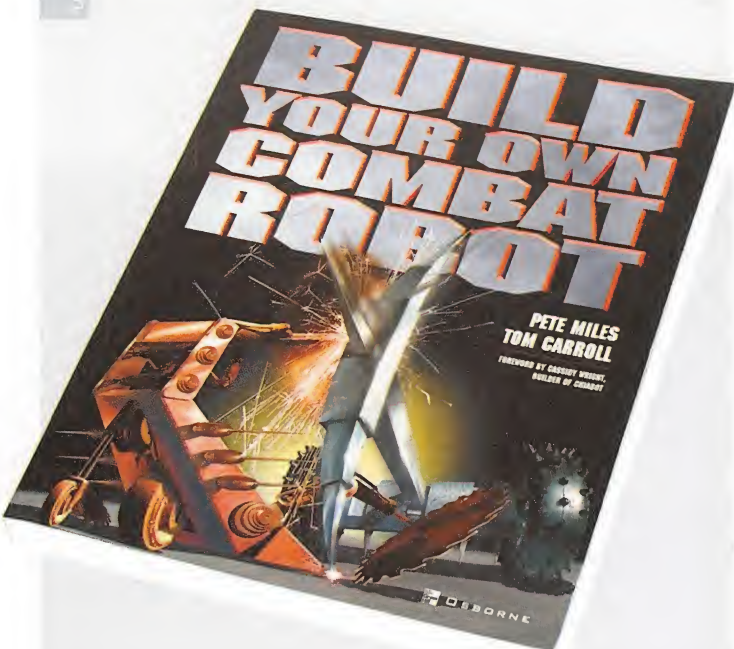
1
CANON DIGITAL IXUS 330
The new digi Ixus. The resolution is still 2.0 mega pixels, but they've added more photo effects, direct printing options and a night time long exposure setting for taking photos in the dark. The sexiest camera in the world.

2
PANASONIC SLMP35
Portable CD players are fashionable again – as long as they have an MP3 logo on them so observers know you're not playing a standard CD. You are, in fact, playing an edgy selection of MP3 bootlegs. Some remixed by yourself.

3
PANASONIC SV-SR100
What a staggering device. Record directly to a Panasonic memory card from any source you fancy, or play standard CDs and MP3 tunes on its CD player. Or just sit there with it on your lap as people gaze in awe of its modernness.

4
SONY ERICSSON T200
Last week we bought the T68. Now they're up to the T200 already. How is a man supposed to keep his phone up to date in the face of such rapidly changing mobile-fashions? You must upgrade. It is survival of the coolest.

5



6



7



8



5

BUILD YOUR OWN COMBAT ROBOT
Be seduced by the part-hobby, part-sport of killer robots as seen on television's Robot Wars. Covering the short history of the sport, the concept, design and construction of robots, this is a wealth of technical and practical knowledge for the beginner. Seasoned with the enthusiastic anecdotes of great robot makers, this is a thinly veiled manifesto for lovers of violence and machines.

6

THE ULTIMATE HISTORY OF ELECTRONIC GAMES
A loving retrospective of gaming from the pre-history of early handhelds and arcades in the 70s to the consoles and PCs of the present. Original box art, screenshots, anecdotes of key players and interviews with the gods (Miyamoto, Garriott et al) make this a touching walk down memory lane. The scope is huge so detail is at a premium.

7

ALTEC LANSING KA 3021 2.1 ANALOG SPEAKER SYSTEM
A surround-ish speaker system geared to the console gamers. This trio features left and right speakers and a giant suggestive sub-woofer. The (trip) wired remote control offers volume control and three equaliser settings. Ideal for gamers with little space or who lack a quality hi-fi system, the system creates a surprisingly high quality of sound.

8

FERRARI 360 MODENA STEERING WHEEL
The 360 Modena replaces the Dual Shock 2 with F1 driving capabilities. The standard button layout of your controller on the face of the wheel means you lose no functionality when using the wheel. Two wheel-mounted motors simulate driving response and the lap-fitting base is liquefied design genius. A highly competent racing wheel for the greater PS2 community.

PSW DELIVERS: ■ THE BIGGEST PS2 GAMES FIRST! ■ RAZOR-SHARP, TOP QUALITY FOOTAGE ■ MOVIES, MULTI-ANGLE AND COMMENTARY! ■ OVER TWO HOURS OF ACTION!
 PSW DOES NOT: ■ MISLEAD YOU WITH FAKE EXCLUSIVES ■ USE PC AND XBOX GAME CLIPS ■ SUCK UP TO ANYONE! WE'RE INDEPENDENT!

ON THE DVD



WELCOME

I've seen things you people wouldn't believe. Attack ships on fire off the shoulder of Orion... I watched C-beams glitter in the dark near the Tannhäuser gate. All those moments will be lost in time, like tears in rain. No wait! They won't be lost, because I

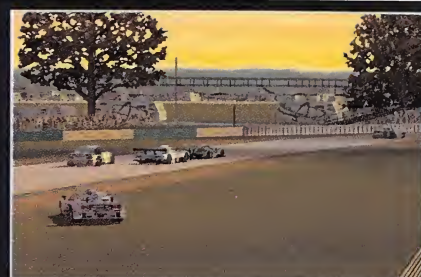
fortuitously recorded them all to DVD so that in the event of my death my memories and life experiences will live on in a high quality digital format! As you can see, it's been a great month for creating memories of games. In the future I shall remember issue 4's PSW DVD with such fondness, and, dare I suggest, I shall shed a tear or two as I look back at all the fun we had putting it together. For the sake of clarity I should point out that it is not me playing *Burnout 2* on the disc – it's one of the developers. I'm not very good at games, as is often pointed out within the office. Those memories I shall delete. No one need know.
 / GRAHAM SMITH DISC EDITOR



● BURNOUT 2

IT'S IN THE EXCLUSIVE SECTION

We made one of the creators play it so it looks good and you're not just watching us scraping along barriers all the time. They're really rather good at playing it, and the game itself looks equally as cool. A lot of jumps, a lot less blurry boost effects and, incredibly, a slightly upped feeling of speed makes *Burnout 2* a game we're looking forwards to quite a lot. But hey, don't take our word for it – watch the DVD and see for yourself.



● TOTAL IMMERSION RACING

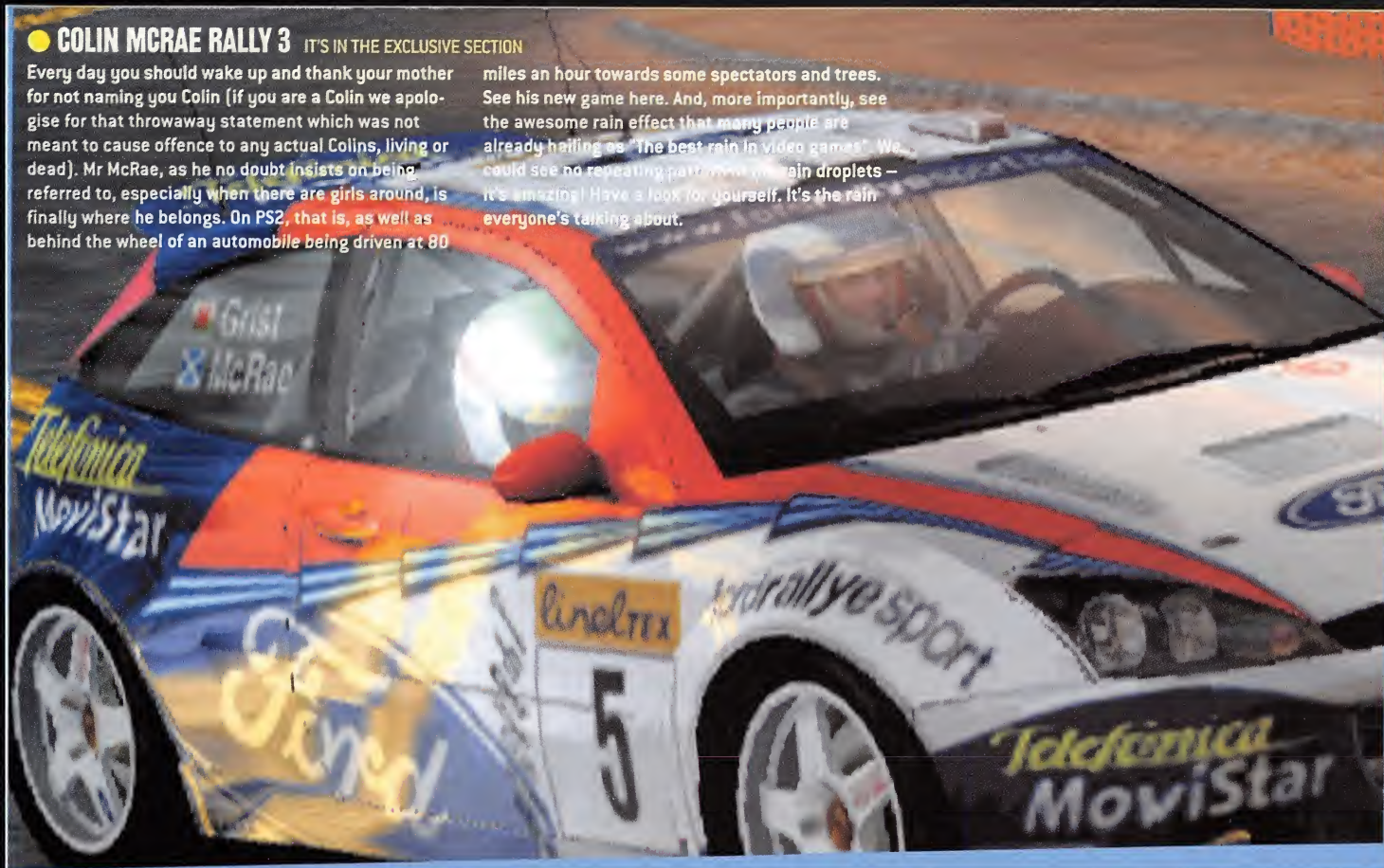
IT'S IN THE PREVIEWS SECTION

"Is that *V8 Supercars*?" said a lot of people upon walking past, such is the impressive nature of this right-out-of-nowhere racer. It has detailed cars and fast action, along with a harder, more technically demanding style of play compared to *V8* or *Burnout 2*. It comes with a career mode as well (not shown however, as career modes don't make the best edited DVD clips). Go see.

● COLIN MCRAE RALLY 3 IT'S IN THE EXCLUSIVE SECTION

Every day you should wake up and thank your mother for not naming you Colin (if you are a Colin we apologise for that throwaway statement which was not meant to cause offence to any actual Colins, living or dead). Mr McRae, as he no doubt insists on being referred to, especially when there are girls around, is finally where he belongs. On PS2, that is, as well as behind the wheel of an automobile being driven at 80

miles an hour towards some spectators and trees. See his new game here. And, more importantly, see the awesome rain effect that many people are already hailing as "The best rain in video games". We could see no repeating pattern in the rain droplets – it's amazing! Have a look for yourself. It's the rain everyone's talking about.



XBOX

EXCLUSIVE: *Contra*, *Silent Hill 3*, *Burnout 2*, *Red Faction 2*, *Spyro: Enter the Dragonfly*

NEWS: *Antz Racing*, *The Scorpion King*, *Jurassic Park: Project Genesis*, *Disney's Stitch: Experiment 626*, *Hitman 2: Silent Assassin*, *Shinobi*, *UFC Throwdown*, *Jimmy Neutron Boy Genius*

PREVIEWS: *Conflict: Desert Storm*, *The Thing*, *Riding Spirits*, *Total Immersion Racing*, *Colin McRae Rally 3*, *Rally Fusion: Race of Champions*, *MX Superfly*, *Rayman 3*, *Simpsons Skateboarding*

REVIEWS: *Dino Stalker*, *Scooby Doo! Night of 100 Frights*, *Slam Tennis*, *International Cue Club*, *End Game*, *Fire Blade*, *Men In Black 2: Alien Escape*, *Pacman World 2*

WIN!

FIVE FORCE FEEDBACK THRUSTMASTER WHEELS

You should know how much we love racing games. Hell, we cover enough of them, you'd have to be blind and/or cretinously forgetful not to realise. We also know how much you love racing games. Given the amount of pages we dedicate to vehicular pursuits each month, we know you wouldn't buy the mag if you didn't feel the need for speed.

So, as lovers of four-wheeled, petrol-fuelled antics, we all know that sometimes the sturdy old Dual Shock just isn't up to the task. Wouldn't it be great to have something better with which to fling your bucket of bolts across the bitumen? Well, thanks to Guillemot, now we do.

Thrustmaster's 360 Modena Force GT is the only steering peripheral on the market that supports every single PlayStation2 racing title. (In fact, it's even compatible with PSone games!)

The Force GT's feature list is a virtual driver's dream:

- Thrustmaster Force Feedback technology
100% compatible with all racing games on PlayStation2 and Psone
- 2 progressive wheel levers for accelerating and braking
- Rubber on handgrips
- Exclusive knee-top design to play everywhere on a sofa, a bed, a chair.
- Switch Function to get customized driving experience (no vibration, vibration, Force Feedback)
- 8 way D-pad
- 2 sturdy pedals
- 8 action buttons
- 3 Playable Modes: Digital, Analog and Negcon

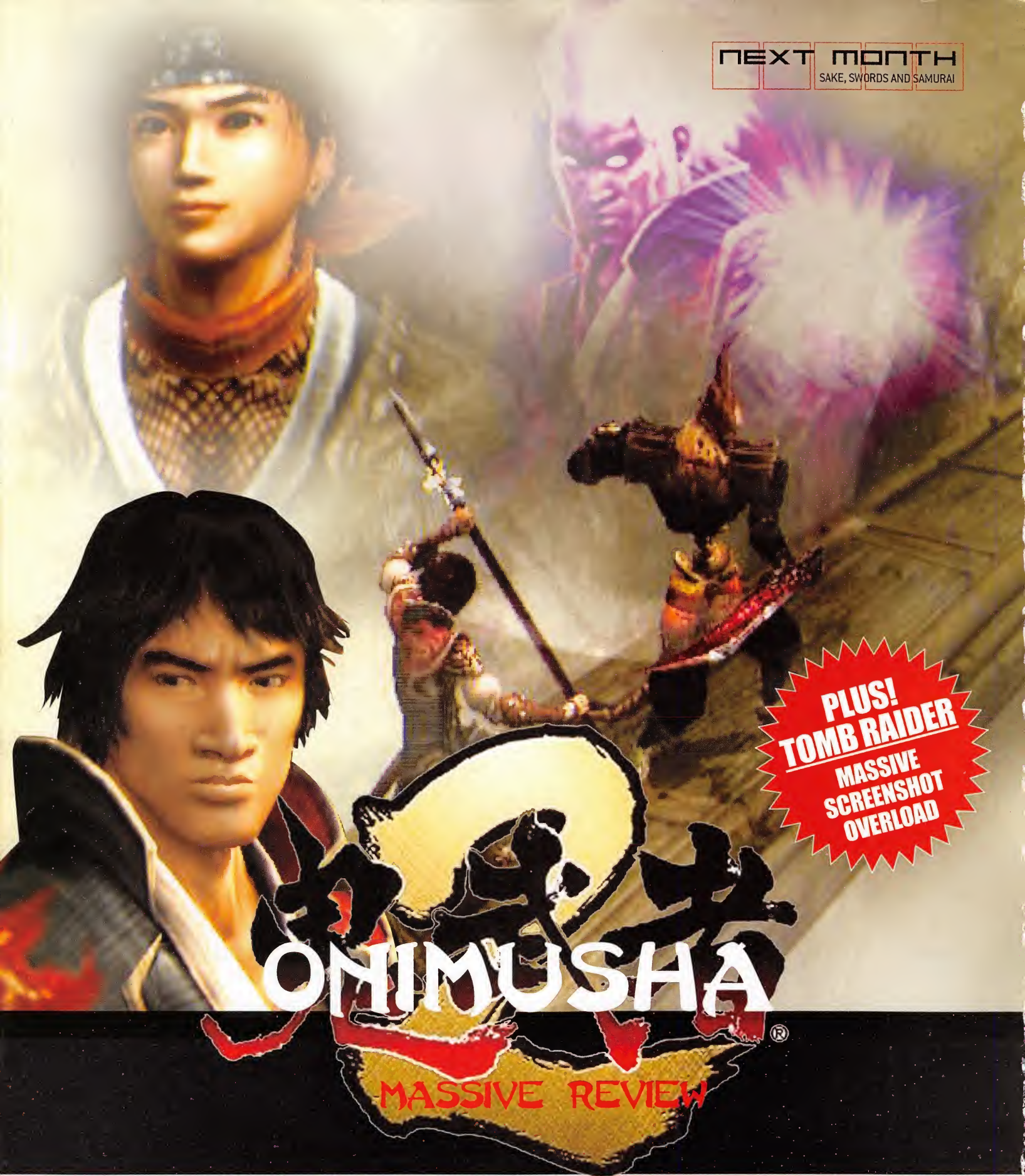
Just answer this question on the back of an envelope and send it to the address below.

Q. In which country is the town of Modena located?

PSW
Thrustmaster Comp
78 Renwick St
Redfern NSW 2016
Australia

Courtesy of the delightful Katy at Guillemot, PSW has five Force GTs to give away. Also, just because we're nice, we'll also throw in five Thrustmaster t-shirts – perfect bedwear for the discerning gamer.





ONIMUSHA

MASSIVE REVIEW

FEATURED ON THE PSW DVD

METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SUBSTANCE / NEW RED FACTION 2 / MASSIVE TIMESPLITTERS 2 BASH / THE SIMS /
JAMES BOND 007 IN... NIGHTFIRE / TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4 / TUROK EVOLUTION / WRC 2 AND MORE!

ON SALE OCTOBER 9 : IMITATORS BE DAMNED!

CONTENT SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE

STAR WARS *Unleashed*

These powerful and meticulously designed, artist-interpreted sculptures capture some of the most compelling *Star Wars* characters in their rawest and most electrifying moments.

Their innermost emotions and essences are frozen in time with stunning artistry and detail. Collect them all for a stunning display of one of the greatest sagas of all time.

Jango & Boba Fett™



Anakin Skywalker™



Darth Vader™



Padmé Amidala™



Darth Maul™



TRUST NOTHING FEAR EVERYTHING

THE THING™

PARANOIA IS YOUR ONLY HOPE!



- WORK AS A SQUAD OR DIE.
- RELENTLESS ENEMY WITH RELENTLESS INTELLIGENCE.



- NEW UNIQUE TRUST/FEAR INTERFACE IS ONE OF YOUR MOST POWERFUL WEAPONS.



- SURVIVAL IS EQUAL PARTS FIREPOWER AND PSYCHOLOGY.



INFESTING SOON

"This game is going to scare the crap out of you"

- Gamespy



PlayStation 2

XBOX



www.thethinggames.com